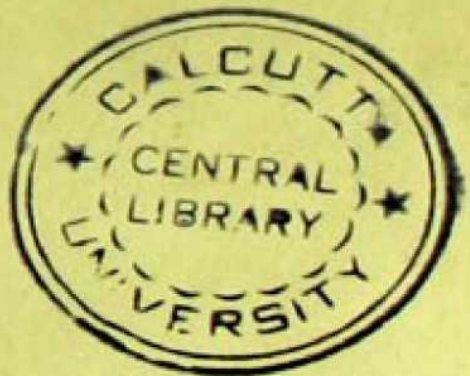




# THE IDEALIST THEORY OF VALUE

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DEDICATED

TO

My FATHER





## PREFACE

This book is substantially the thesis submitted and approved for the Degree of D.Phil. of the Calcutta University in 1960. The idealist theory of Value is the theme of the book. The term "idealism" is taken both in a narrow and in a wide sense. In the narrow sense idealism means the theory according to which mind and its ideas are the only realities that are there, while in the wide sense it is identical with the view that absolute Spirit or a superconscient principle is the ultimate stuff of the universe, or at least the presupposition of all that exists. So the term "idealism" covers a vast field. That is why the discussion in the book ranges over systems of philosophy from Platonism to Neo-Hegelianism.

Up to the first quarter of the twentieth century, idealism held the field of philosophy. But for some years now idealist philosophy in general, and the idealist theory of Value in particular, has been at a discount. This is one reason why I took upon myself the task of analysing the idealist theory of Value in order to find out whether it contains any element of enduring importance. To discover elements of truth in the idealist theory is indeed an effective way of disproving its critic's thesis. Here, then, I have made only an indirect approach to the contemporary ethical theories. A positive study I propose to undertake later.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge my indebtedness to Dr. A. C. Das of Calcutta University, under whose guidance I worked out my thesis. His intellectual acumen and power of acute analysis inspired me in my research. I am grateful to the University Grants Commission for financing the publication of the book, and also to the authorities of the Calcutta University for undertaking the publication of it. My thanks are due to the Registrar, Calcutta University, and to the Superintendent, Calcutta University Press, for their help in the production of this work.

Calcutta,  
November 12, 1965.

A. C.





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## INTRODUCTION

The concept of value is of interest to philosophy. It has much occupied philosophers for the last two centuries. During this time Bosanquet was probably the first to emphasize the problem of value, and Hartmann was among those distinguished thinkers of the twentieth century who developed the theory of value. Contemporary philosophy, however, goes to extreme in developing the emotive and linguistic theories of value.

So the problem deserves our attention. For the concept of value has deep significance for human life, though this fact is not always recognized. The nature of the object we value determines the way of our life, including our reaction to Nature. We may say that value itself determines the destiny of the universe as controlled by men. The implication of it all will be clear in the course of the discussion that follows.

Idealist philosophy, beginning with Plato and ending with Royce, has much about the nature of value, though the problem is not quite often mentioned therein by name. In fact, idealists treat the problem as it arises in the course of the enquiry into the nature of reality. But each of them has a significant contribution to make to the theory of value.

I should like to say, at the outset, that the idealist theory of value is based on the principle of self-realisation. Nothing is valuable except as a vehicle of our self-realisation. But this statement may cause confusion in many minds. Indeed there are three important issues here, and these I should make clear before I proceed further.

The issues are as follows :—

- (a) How are we to link self-realisation to reality?
- (b) How does the principle of self-realisation constitute the fundamental principle of value?
- (c) Can the contemporary theory of value discard the thesis of the idealists?

I may briefly state here that, according to the idealist philosophers, the apprehension of reality involves the idea



of our self-realisation. Certainly human minds as realising themselves have not always been given a metaphysical status, and idealist theories vary according to varying reflection on this matter. But it is a fact with all of them that we make an approach to reality through the struggle for realising ourselves. And this is the case if reality is conceived as approachable through knowledge, faith or intuition. Life begins with an attempt to get a better level for one's self, however meagrely conceived, and it progressively reveals the meaning of one's life. But the striving is not ended without positing reality as the ultimate end. For perfection of one's being is not possible except by way of appreciation of the real.

We may consider the question in the perspective of reality as such, because the divergence between the different philosophers centre round this point. Certainly, for all idealist systems the self-realisation of finite persons somehow occurs in reality. But some would conceive it as a necessary feature of reality, while others would conceive it only as an appearance, having significance only for finite life, reality itself being indifferent to our endeavour. The status of value obviously varies with different thinkers. Yet reality, as it presents itself to the finite life, always involves the necessity of our self-realisation. For, a finite mind, whether competent by itself or not to grasp the nature of reality, moves towards this appreciation under the necessity of its own nature. Moreover, even those who divest the finite values of a metaphysical status assert that the ideal of self-realisation, conceived at the various stages of life, implies reality in some form.

An analysis of the concept of goodness with reference to that of value seems necessary. I will attempt this in the present section. But the concept of will also deserves our attention. For, self-realisation in human life obviously presents itself in an urge which can be called will.

Now, "will" in the ethical context is used in a particular sense and the term cannot be used carelessly. Though will, as usually understood, defines the self-conscious desire discharged by one's entire person, there are some acts of mind in which the essence of will is virtually maintained.





Will, as we know, necessarily refers to some ideal, which is, to be precise, the ideal state of one's character sought to be realised through action. This urge is expressed in the form of will. Will is always for self-realisation, for whatever be the object it refers to, its object is always conceived in relation to the self. In other words, it implies that the self can avail itself of a better state if it has the desired object. The object is significant only as the vehicle of one's self-expression. And if this constitutes the essence of will, it is not hard to trace this essence almost in all human acts. We need not attempt too much to ensure ourselves of the fact that will has its origin in sensuous appetites and all of them refer to things that promise some gratification for the subject. The idea of a consistent character is not known so far and the object and its relation to the self are rather crudely conceived. Yet the urge is one for some satisfaction of the agent and so the idea of self-realisation is not absent, though it is immature as yet.

The idealists like Kant, Spinoza and Hegel, who trace the principle of self-realisation through the entire life of a man, find the beginning of the human life in sentient feelings. We in some way crave for self-realisation from the very first, though the conception of it gets clarified by and by.

According to some eminent idealists, the self can truly realise itself when it transcends the region of will. Hegel and the Neo-Hegelians adopt such a view. While for Hegel perfection belongs to the realm of absolute knowledge, the Neo-Hegelians find it in intuition or faith. I will not enter into any discussion here, I would only like to state that will cannot be abandoned in any of the said experiences, if the essence of will is, as we have seen, the active urge for realising oneself. Bradley says that in no sphere of life is will really absent.<sup>1</sup> Every act can be morally considered, if it is taken in relation to the nature of the subject. Religion is equally a means to one's own perfection as morality is. So is also knowledge, at least as defined by Hegel, for whom it is a way to realise the infinity latent in one's own self.

<sup>1</sup> *Ethical Studies.*





We will see in the concluding chapter of the discourse that knowledge in all its forms bears this stamp. The conclusion I draw here is that each human act embodies this principle in some form or other. And I am convinced that this principle of self-realisation which constitutes the essence of will initiates human acts in the realms of life prior and posterior to what is generally defined as the acute sphere of will.

I should not be taken amiss. I do not mean to say that the principle of self-realisation, either implicitly or explicitly present, is itself able to make a case of will besides all the other features like self-conscious discharge of the entire character with reference to an object, which moral philosophy has taken to be the constituents of moral life. The difference between will and the other forms of self-seeking are not negligible. Nor should I like to dispose of the fact that the distinctive values that are known and pursued in one's self-conscious life centre round a sphere generally known as the sphere of morality. I only make it my business to show that the realm of will is a realm of value precisely because of the principle of self-realisation. It will be gradually seen whether the principle itself is able to stand as the initiating principle of all evaluations. But it is true that with all its other elements will creates itself as a self-conscious and whole-hearted determination of this principle. It seems that I argue in a circle. But the principle is shown to constitute the essential principle of value. However, it may be contended that if will is the sphere of value for being a manifestation of this principle, the other activities of life are also explicable in terms of value; they also embody the same principle, though not as distinctively as will does. And I need not repeat here that all the idealist theories, with the obvious exception of Hegel, whose position is somehow distinguished, refer value mainly to will, because it is in will that we consciously discharge ourselves for the sake of the ideal perfection of ourselves. The peculiarity of the Hegelian idea, however, has been already found. But I should ascertain the case of self-realisation as the central principle of value.





## INTRODUCTION

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Hartmann has given to values a place between the existing actuality and the hovering possibilities.<sup>1</sup> This position seems quite justified, and the reason is simple. Value has obviously to explore the realm of possibilities as it suggests some ideal form of activity on the part of the agent with reference to the *valuable*. The question regarding the principal values—truth, goodness and beauty—is, however, more complicated in the sense that not only the behaviour but also the object valued is to be ideally explained in those cases. Opinions regarding the nature of values are in no way unanimous. I shall refer to some of them towards the end of this chapter. But the common-sense analysis of value introduces one to its ideal character, and I will now consider this point.

Outside the context of philosophy the term "value" has various uses. We are familiar with it as it is used in economics and in the world of practical science. What do these sciences mean when they speak about value?

### *Section I*

In economics value refers to some commodity. Certainly, it may be turned towards some action but only to mean that the particular act is useful for the sake of that commodity which determines its value. But it is clear that the commodity, even if it is objectively valuable, involves the idea of some 'ought' on our part. Obviously I am not importing here an ethical concept. All that I mean is this, that if water, for instance, is an object of value, water is considered as something to be preserved, to be properly distributed and to be used in the best profitable way. It may be argued that here at least in this particular context, the object as well as the acts are of a nature that suggests no ideal which is really beyond our reach. The answer is twofold. In the first place it is not unthinkable that there is always a better than the best available, and as our experience tells us, we can never do with complete satisfaction what should be done in any province of life. Even in the

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics I. Introduction.*



highest civilised country people are to be made alert of how they must behave with regard to something—some object of essential importance, and a careful scrutiny can disclose in spite of everything that the experts might do better than they have done. Moreover, it is evident from any book of economics that economics does not confer value on anything and everything useful. An object to be valuable must combine in itself two characteristics. It must be useful on the one hand and not available for the mere asking on the other. We must do our best for its sake as it is essential and is scarce. That is to say, the idea of the object as valuable implies a number of *oughts* on our part. It is an object with reference to which we will have to act with some sort of care which it deserves, or there is an ideal form of action to which we must adjust ourselves by adequate attention and endeavour. This ideality is the characteristic of all economic values.

Now, the principle of self-realisation is, as we see, involved in this idea. For the reason why we should adjust our action to the object in order to make the best of it is that the object is of utmost necessity. It serves, in other words, an essential need of our selves, and it may be said that the self realises some of its ends in the object. The suggestion is in no way hedonistic, however. I speak of *realisation* and not of mere satisfaction, though it appears that realisation in all cases is followed by a certain satisfaction. I do not like to raise here a dispute regarding the subjectivity or objectivity of values. But if we are asked, if the value of the object is present in the object itself, irrespective of the endeavour on the part of the agent, the answer is not far to seek. What do I mean by considering the thing as objectively valuable? The object, I agree, has certain characteristics in virtue of serving some purposes of ours. Water, for instance, serves some human ends. All this is obviously true. Is it not, then, a fact that the characteristics of the object which we regard as valuable are conceived in terms of a relation of the object to *some human needs*? The chemical properties of water are considered and analysed apart from our practical needs altogether but are deemed valuable only with reference to our economic



life. We can define the properties as objects of knowledge as such. But I think I am able to show by analysis that no knowledge is really disinterested and divested of human purpose, and that we can well subsume even knowledge under value.

## Section II

I may now proceed to analyse the fundamental values—truth, goodness and beauty. These three values are linked respectively to knowledge, morality and aesthetic appreciation, though the realm of truth is all-pervading, in the sense that even in the case of moral and aesthetic values the question whether they are *true* remains. This problem is taken up by the modern theories to which I will turn later. Here I analyse the terms mentioned above.

Truth is defined as the conformity of our judgment to the nature of the object. Certainly, the nature of truth has been variously determined by different thinkers. But it seems to me that this conformity is suggested by all of them. Even for the coherence theory, a judgment is supposed to represent the relevant object only when it coheres with other judgments. But if the essence of truth is this, it is hard to see how can it provide either for our self-realisation or for any ideality.

I am not anxious to initiate here any epistemological debate. What I want to do is to show that knowledge itself involves self-realisation in some sense and that self-realisation affects truth, the ideal of knowledge as well. I have elaborately discussed the point in the last chapter of this dissertation, but I think I should refer to it here also.

Truth, we have seen, is the ideal of knowledge, and through the said conformity knowledge attains truth. The question of value, however, is apart and cannot be ascertained out of the situation just stated. The clock, for instance, should strike twelve precisely in the middle of the day, and if it does, I should not say the clock attains its destined value. And though I am told that in this case the clock has a kind of self-realisation, I am not indeed prepared to define value only as such. Self-realisation, I assume, though not always conscious, is explicable only in terms of consciousness.





Knowledge can be reasonably referred to intellect, a mental faculty. This faculty has as its essential feature the aptitude for knowing the real nature of things, the world and ourselves. The concept, of course, may be very crudely applied to the lower forms of life. But self-realisation there means nothing more than bare living. However, my intention is not to glorify human nature as such by ascribing to every mind an intellectual craving. All that I mean is that the will to know is a factor in some form present in every mind. It is, in short, a constituent of human mind, and truth embodies its ideal of perfection. Therefore, our search for truth can be defined as a search for self-realisation, which is only ended in truth.

Even some idealist systems have defined truth not as a value (strictly in the sense in which moral and aesthetic objects are valuable), but as validity. If a judgment conforms to the pattern which our reason assumes as the test of its correctness, the judgment is valid. It is like a question conforming to the model answer. Certainly, you can explain it in this way. And, in this way, it involves an amount of ideality and requires some participation of the agent's mind. But that does not imply self-realisation in the true sense of the term. Self-realisation in the true sense can be read in the nature of truth only if we can explain it with reference to the self in the manner stated above. Idealists, however, do not seem to be unanimous about the status of truth in the realm of value.

Possibly I need not devote much space to ascertaining that moral and aesthetic appreciation can be explained with reference to one's urge to realise oneself. The case of morality seems to be certain in this respect. For it follows from its very definition that morality refers to one's character, the entire person as such and necessarily involves an "ought" or ideal. Some modern theories have denied to the moral judgment any more worth than that of mere expression of emotion. But then they could not deny that the emotion which morality involves is initiated by the personality of the agent and is stable, at least relatively. It has been, of course, argued that one's idea of value will change along with the change of his emotional background.



But this emotional background, as I understand it, is normally steady for a person, at least for a certain period, and constitutes an essential element of his character. And if this background is changed, the nature of the person, which is the source of moral acts, will also change. I shall soon take up a brief survey of the modern interpretations of value. I can, however, state at this stage that the idea of self-realisation will prevail so long as acts are initiated by will.

The case of aesthetics is not any more complicated. In fact, the two values have often been treated together. For the appreciation of beauty, though not directly related to will, is always defined as a free act of the mind in which the mind is not externally determined by anything. It enjoys, in a sense, more freedom than will does, as it is not determined by any interest, nor by any mechanically acquired habit. Kant describes our aesthetic appreciation in this manner. But it seems to me that the aesthetic aptitude of a man necessarily depends on his mental make-up and is regarded as a contentment of that nature which has this tendency as one of its essential aspects. The aptitude is in a way present in every person, but the degree and form of it is determined by the pattern of one's self.

### *Section III*

The rest of this chapter I shall devote to a consideration of the current conceptions of value. Though the idealist theory of value is my main concern I shall do well to consider the modern theories of value. I shall be very brief, however, and refrain from a long discussion.

The modern era was inspired by the theory of the logical positivists which makes much of emotion in the context of morality. I shall fix on this point. Yet there are some others, held by some distinguished thinkers, and a reference to them may not be irrelevant. Among these I find the different approbative theories—the moral sentiment theory supported by Westermack, Rogers, McDougall and some others, and the social and theological approbative theories.





The Pragmatic theory of value is mainly cultivated by Dewy, Tufts and Mead, while the Affective theory is given by Santayana, Reid and others. Besides, there is the Deontological theory pleaded by Ross, Prichard and Broad.

The Emotive theory deserves more attention than the other theories. So I start with it. The theory is developed by the logical positivists and directly follows from their empiricism. It has often been said that logical positivism is only a revival of the older empiricism of Hume, and this is so because of its uncompromising belief in the reality of experience. According to logical positivism, what is experienced is a fact and only a fact which is verifiable by experience is true, while here experience means only perceptual experience. A statement is therefore significant if it expresses something which is verifiable by this empirical test, i.e., if the object referred to is capable of being proved by experience either true or false. However, the rigorous attitude of some positivists has recently been modified. As Ayer says, "It seems to me that if we adopt conclusive verifiability as our criterion of significance, as some positivists have proposed, our argument will prove too much.....Nor can we accept the suggestion that a sentence should be allowed to be factually significant if, and only if, it expresses something which is definitely confutable by experience."<sup>1</sup> He continues :

"I propose to say that a statement is directly verifiable if it is either itself an observation statement, or is such that in conjunction with one or more observation statement it entails at least one observation statement which is not deducible from other premises alone; and I propose to say that a statement is indirectly verifiable if it satisfies the following conditions: first, that in conjunction with certain other premises it entails one or more directly verifiable statements which are not deducible from these other premises alone, and secondly, that these other premises do not include any statement that is not either analytic or directly veri-

<sup>1</sup> *Language, Logic and Truth*, pp. 37-38. Dover Publication Inc., New York.





fiable, or capable of independently established as indirectly verifiable. And I can now reformulate the principle of verification as requiring of a literally meaningful statement, which is not analytic, that it should be either directly or indirectly verifiable in the foregoing sense."<sup>1</sup>

The question is: What status does this philosophy afford to values and value-judgments? The judgments of value, as we understand them, involve our moral and aesthetic assertions. These are not statements of facts that may stand the test of verification in any of the above senses. Yet such statements have traditionally been called judgments capable of truth and falsity. Logical positivists, on the other hand, rule out any such possibility. "We set ourselves out to show", as they say, "that in so far as statements of value are significant, they are ordinary 'scientific' statements; and that in so far as they are not scientific, they are not in the literal sense significant, but are simply expressions of emotion which can be neither true nor false".<sup>2</sup> Let me try to analyse the position.

"Procrastination is bad." This statement can be taken for a typical moral statement and as a judgment of value. Now procrastination is a kind of act which can be experienced. We can empirically verify whether a certain case is a case of procrastination. Again, when I make the judgment I have a psychical operation in my mind which also I can perceive. The assertion, I see, is attended with fear, aversion or hate which are psychical events of some sorts. But where exactly is the place of the "bad"? It is identical neither with procrastination as a performed action nor with the psychical events that take place when I commit the judgment. We may define it as a qualification of the act, or, as a value conferred upon it. But what is meant by this qualification, or, why do we qualify it in this way? This qualification is not a sensible property and cannot be real according to the given definition. The philosophers who belong to the Vienna Circle flatly reject the value-judgments

<sup>1</sup> *Language, Logic and Truth*, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 103.





as meaningless. The position developed by Ayer in the *Language, Logic and Truth*, however, is different from that he sustains in his later works. But he introduces the general Emotive theory by defining a statement of value as an expression of some emotion, and explains "good" or "evil" as mere pseudo-concepts. Ayer says, "If I say to someone, 'You acted wrongly in stealing that money', I am not stating anything more than if I had simply said, 'You stole that money'. In adding that this action is wrong I am not making any further statement about it. I am simply evincing my moral disapproval of it. It is as if I had said, 'You stole that money', in a peculiar tone of horror, or written it with the addition of some special exclamation marks. The tone or the exclamation mark adds nothing to the literal meaning of the sentence. It merely serves to show that the expression of it is attended by certain feeling in the speaker."<sup>1</sup>

There is obviously a distinction between the expression of a feeling and one's assertion about one's state of feeling. The distinction as Ayer conceives it is one between the assertion that "I am bored with you" and the simple expression of the boredom by an exclamation of "Ah". In the latter case I do not make any assertive judgment about the presence of a feeling in my mind, but simply express the feeling. The difference between the Subjectivist and the Emotive theories is said to turn on this point, and the emotivist finds himself in a better position than the subjectivist. For, in the first place, the subjectivist conceives of an illegitimate identity between factual assertion and normative statement, and in the second place, he regards the validity of ethical judgment as determined by the agent's state of mind alone. The emotivist, however, thinks that he can escape the latter position by denying the possibility of validity being expressed in a normative statement. But there is an obvious difficulty about this theory. So far I may believe that "right" or "wrong" are just expressions of my feeling of approval or disapproval, or, at least, that this feeling necessarily accom-

<sup>1</sup> *Language, Logic and Truth*, p. 107.





panies my normative statements. Yet we often discuss and dispute the validity of a moral assertion by enquiring whether one is correct in proclaiming a certain process as wrong. And this dispute is significant only if there is a criterion of our moral decision. The logical positivist defines the possibility of this dispute by the existence of a common emotional background for the disputants who are habituated to similar ideas, customs, etc. The conditions in which we live determine our mental form and also the pattern of our emotional response. People living under the same circumstances are similarly inspired. Norms or values change according to the change of the grounds that determine our mental make-up. To take the instance of an aesthetic appreciation, a deep wound on a feminine face is believed to be a sign of beauty in some part of Africa, while such decoration will only strike us with horror. In fact, conceptions of moral virtues vary according to time and place. A society needs to revise its ideas when its conditions undergo distinctive changes, when its people no more feel or act in the traditional way.

We may further define this by saying that the dispute about the validity of a moral decision is significant only on the presupposition of a certain system of values existing for the disputants. It is only when we know that a certain principle or result is absolutely valuable that we dispute when somebody acts against it. Certainly, he would defend himself with an equal vigour, only because he believes that he is being misunderstood, or, that it is only in the kind of act he does that the moral principle is truly preserved or it is only by such an act that the valuable result is obtained. And we know it to be certain that between absolutely different positions there can be no point in dispute. Even when I try to convince you of my opinion by saying that you should have a feeling of approval to such a thing, I assume that you have some misapprehension of the nature of the thing, it really has a certain nature which you and I regard as valuable.<sup>1</sup>

\* The phrase "system of value presupposed" removes the

<sup>1</sup> *Language, Logic and Truth*, III.





difficulty that may arise in this connection. The solution is obviously suggested from the positivist's side. Moral precepts, he says, are emotive. But it is often found that a man finds an action normative, *i.e.*, something which he should follow, though he does not *feel* like doing it. There is seemingly a contrast, here, between the norm and his emotion.

The positivist, however, does not deny the possibility of such instances. But he denies that they involve a point against him. For what does the person really mean? Obviously, he *believes* the act to be *good*, though he does not feel like doing it in his present mental condition. But, again, why does he hold such a belief at all? May be that it is recommended by some authority or is sanctioned by a social custom. Yet he does not believe in it only because somebody recommends it as valid, but because he himself takes it to be so, or because whatever is authorised by a worthy person or society is necessarily believed to be valid. The belief in the validity of whatever the authority in question asserts can be explained, as we shall see in Findlay, as a case of transference of the emotive attitude towards the authority for which we possess a feeling of reverence which makes us yield to all their persuasions. The former explanation also turns round the same centre. For when it is said that I *believe* in the goodness of an action but do not *feel* like performing it, this belief, according to the logical positivist, cannot be justified otherwise than as a feeling of approval, which in fact arises from a regard for the act or the results it will bring about. I have an emotional tendency towards this act in my inner mind, though I cannot adjust to it my present feelings. If, on the other hand, this reverence were absent, I would have refused to believe in its validity and appealed for a change in the definition of *good*.

Ayer, however, effects some modification in his own position in his *Philosophical Essays*. There in a context he says, "To say, as I once did, that these moral judgments are merely expressive of certain feelings, feelings of approval or disapproval, is an over-simplification. The fact is rather that what may be described as moral attitude consists in certain patterns of behaviour, and the expression of moral





judgment is an element in the pattern. The moral judgment expresses the attitude in the sense that it contributes to defining it."<sup>1</sup> That is to say, the term 'good' attached to a certain act not only means that the agent is pleased or has a favourable feeling towards the act, but also his recommendation of the act for himself as well as others. It seems to be a case of approval and not merely a feeling of it. But this recommendation, as the emotivist defines it, is not based on rational calculation. It comes from the emotional constitution of one's nature, as referred to above. Two alternatives are possible in the case of such an interpretation. Either we should say that reason must be taken to limit its course to the act of verification, where it works as a tool of experience, or, that mere calculation cannot create a norm. Values are the spontaneous outcome of the total nature which is more ruled by emotion than by anything else. And we may take it to mean that reason becomes inhibited in its function, and is smothered with emotions. It all is determined by the very constitution of emotion and its expressions are emotive and not instances of discrete calculation. But I think reason cannot be wholly eliminated from our nature.

Anyway, the suggestion of a recommendation is very significant. In fact the normative character of the moral proposition is well reflected in this attitude. The act is no longer considered to be such that the speaker is only pleased with it, but is a kind of act which he finds worthy of performing. And common sense seems to conform to this definition of 'good' as taken in the moral context, though it may not agree with the reasons which the positivist asserts as the ground of his position.

Prof. Carnap takes almost the same line. But he considers ethical statements under two heads, namely descriptive ethical propositions and truly normative sentences which are but unverifiable expressions of human feelings.<sup>2</sup>

A similar position is maintained in Stevenson's *Ethics and Language*.<sup>3</sup> It strongly opposes the inclusion of

<sup>1</sup> P. 238, MacMillan & Co., London, 1954.

<sup>2</sup> *Philosophy and Logical Syntax*, London, 1935.

<sup>3</sup> *New Haven*, Yale University Press, 1944.





normative sentences in the category of knowledge and limits the latter to logico-mathematical propositions and statements of facts which alone can be true or valid. Norms are believed to be emotive or expressive of attitude.

Yet Stevenson seems to afford a certain validity to the ethical judgments. He at least resists the attempt to divest them of all possibilities of truth and falsity.<sup>1</sup> For an ethical sentence, though consisting mainly of normative terms, is always accompanied by a descriptive statement as well which definitely determines our attitude. The attitude is strengthened or weakened according as the facts it refers to are found to be true or not. In fact, he says, "All disagreement in attitude is rooted in the disagreement in belief."<sup>2</sup> These beliefs are verifiable; so we cannot deny validity to these "persuasive" statements in every sense of the term. Thus Stevenson seems to develop a position which is slightly different from that of the positivists. Or, to quote Hill, "Stevenson would seem to admit by a rear door a validity which he was disposed to exclude at the front door."<sup>3</sup>

However, there are some who assert the possibility of verification of "emotive sentences" in a more significant way. According to Popper, they are capable of something like truth or falsity, while for Findlay they can be really true or false.

I will take up Popper's view first. Popper, like his forerunners, insists upon the non-descriptive character of ethical statements. They are believed not to express 'facts', nor are they deducible from facts. Indeed, the normative force of an ethical sentence cannot be inferred even from a statement describing anything about norm. That is to say, the normative expression "Do not steal" cannot be deduced from the sentence "That most people agree with the norm 'Do not steal' is a sociological fact."<sup>4</sup> The latter is a statement of fact, while the former expresses a command in a tone of persuasion. Yet the expressive meaning of the command is not all. As Popper says, "The reluctance to

<sup>1</sup> *New Haven*, Yale University Press, 1944, p. 267.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 136.

<sup>3</sup> *Contemporary Ethical Theories*, p. 21.

<sup>4</sup> *The Open Society and its Enemies*, Vol. I, p. 52.



admit that norms are something important and irreducible is one of the main sources of the intellectual and other weaknesses of the progressive circles of our time :"<sup>1</sup> And he further asserts that there is one kind of fact from which normative attitudes can be deduced. We can conceive of a validity of norms in moral sphere in correspondence to the concept of truth in knowledge. "This would seem to mean", he says, "that a certain Norm N could be derived from a sentence stating that N is valid, and if we use the word 'fact' in such a wide sense that we speak of the fact that a norm is valid."<sup>2</sup> Now, Popper's presentation seems a bit obscure and I turn to Prior<sup>3</sup> for a clear exposition of his ideas. Popper defines the fact from which a norm may be deduced along with the "fact that a statement is true" as semantic fact, i.e. fact concerning the relation between expressions and what they mean. Prior compares it to the derivation of validity of "Napoleon died on St. Helena" from the "fact that A says so and what A says is true".

But this assertion does not help us much. It cannot really provide a test of the validity of norms. All that it does is to direct our emotive attitude primarily to "A" in Prior's statement and reduce the actual norm to a norm of the second order. That is, we are to believe A's contention as valid only because we have a regard for his word. We believe, in other words, whatever he believes, to be true. The so-called "fact" itself is an expression of emotion and cannot be the test of validity of any other emotive attitude.

Findlay takes his place with the sentimentalists of the eighteenth century. I will not, however, analyse his position in detail, but will only refer to his defence of the validity of norms. By a moral predicate, he says, one is not trying to "discover objects as they stand in nature, without addition or diminution, but to give voice to the demands and feelings which the notion of such objects arouses in one".<sup>4</sup> "This gives voice to" constitutes a serious point of his demarcation from the other contemporary schools for which

<sup>1</sup> *The Open Society and its Enemies*, Vol. I, p. 204.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 205.

<sup>3</sup> *Logic and the Basis of Ethics*, Oxford, 1956.

<sup>4</sup> Article "Morality by Convention", *Mind*, 1944.





the moral judgments are not really judgments capable of truth and falsity. There is a difference between the "factual" and normative contents if the term "fact" is taken for a limited use. But he makes it his business to show that "there is a whole gamut of tests to which a moral judgment, just because it is a moral judgment, must necessarily submit itself; it is customary and proper to say of judgments that survive these tests that they are true or valid."<sup>1</sup> For "even in the case of the most familiar and elementary emotions", as he finds, there are, "certain *claims* involved in them."<sup>2</sup> If I find a figure in a menacing light, it seems dangerous, and I am afraid of it. But if I am afraid of an object and yet know it to be harmless, I am neurotic or at least abnormal in some sense. My feeling is therefore justified on the presupposition of a certain property in the object, on which the feeling makes a claim, and the claim is true or false in correspondence with the truth or falsity of the presupposition. "All attitudes", he says, "presume characters in their objects, and are in consequence strengthened by the discovery that their objects have these characters, as they are weakened by the discovery that they have not got them."<sup>3</sup>

Findlay's assertion of the validity of norms is more direct, but he does not help us any more than Popper does. In short, he cannot cure the Positivistic theory of its utter subjectivism and himself falls a victim to the Emotive theory. I believe that my emotion will be strengthened if the property by which I am led to this feeling really exists. You hate murder and your hate will increase if a murder is actually committed by someone. But this, again, presupposes your existence in an emotional atmosphere which inspires hate against murder. You are, in short, accustomed to feel this way about such incidents. If, on the other hand, a man lives under circumstances which are totally different from ours murder may not arouse in him the same feeling, and in the days when sacrifice of human lives at the

<sup>1</sup> Article "Morality by Convention", *Mind*, 1944.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> "Can God's existence be disproved?" *Mind*, 1948.





alter of God was a religious practice and associated with a feeling of devotion, there was no meaning in saying that people should have hated such things. I can criticise the practice, but only from my point of view of which the ancients had no idea. Of course, Findlay, while speaking of the "Social test" of normative attitudes, says that our emotion is increased or decreased according to its conformity with the decision of persons who duly reflect on our situation and imaginatively enter it.<sup>1</sup> But this idea is not very fruitful as it suggests that the validity in question is based on the conformity of persons living in the same context with one another.

All this should not be taken to mean that I intend to lend my support to the original Emotive theory. What I do is to suggest that neither Popper nor Findlay has been able to offer a true test of the validity of emotive attitudes so that the subjectivity of positivism may be overcome.

However, I do not enter upon a discussion of the Positivist theory. My concern is the Idealist theory of value, though I refer to some modern ideas only to show that they are not really in opposition to this position. I have given here a short exposition of the Emotive theory. According to it, a moral or evaluation judgment<sup>2</sup> can be explained only as an expression of emotion, not necessarily of my like or dislike but of my emotive attitude towards the act or object which is determined by my emotional background or the system of values in which I live. This system of values, can be defined by a set of beliefs which again are referred back to our emotions, not of course those of the shifting moments, but the deep-rooted feeling of respect for certain things and aversion for others. The values are not *facts*; they are not verifiable.

The theory, therefore, presupposes a man with his emotions, the persuasion of which he believes to be good for himself as well as for others. He believes, in other words, that he will attain his perfection as a moral being

<sup>1</sup> "Morality by Convention", *Mind*, 1944, p. 160.

<sup>2</sup> The aesthetic experience is also explained alike. Vide *Language, Logic and Truth*.





only if he follows these dictates. Now, the moral being of a person we assume to be his essential being. It is an aspect of one's self in which one is not determined by anything external as one is in the case of knowledge. One lives truly by oneself in the moral sphere of life. So according to the emotivist himself, a moral agent proceeds towards self-realisation by the persuasion of the relevant emotions.

The same is true of aesthetic values. For here also we believe to act as free agents. The ideas that serve as the critic of our appreciation of beauty are *taken* to represent the realisation of our aesthetic nature.

The above explanation is certainly one which the emotivist would only accept as *our* belief.

Yet the emotivist, being an empiricist, cannot deny the existence of emotions as psychical existents. A man as an *individual* does not consist of mere experiences of "facts", but of his emotions, beliefs, ideas and values which constitute his character. So when these point to an ideal, it is obviously the ideal of his self-perfection.

Now, we may ask if there is a possibility of self-deception here, whether the emotions will be really satisfied with the ideal they believe to be true. But the possible alternative to this course is as absurd as anything. Let us suppose that our emotions have their perfection in a sort of end for which we have no emotive inclination. In that case we may have a fulfilment, but not as emotional beings. If the end is that for which we have no emotional inclination, it is based only on the idea of the total extinction of our emotions, which constitute the distinctive features of our individuality. And I truly believe in the Platonic doctrine that the perfection of a thing is after its own kind.

The question of self-deception may arise in another connection. I may be misinterpreting my own nature, as my true emotions may hide behind the overwhelming mass of tradition and authority. The difficulty is obviously practical, and I shall return to it later. The belief in tradition is a kind of emotion. But if this belief really contradicts my basic individual nature, it will involve innumerable moral conflicts, which may, according to the trend of my character and the circumstances, affect my belief in tradition and





make me seek for new values. Such cases are not infrequent, though it takes generations to prepare people for a 'revaluation of values'.

Another point which is not to be raised by the positivist is whether the self is definable only in terms of emotion. The question is whether there is a self which has its own values apart from those asserted by mere emotion. But here also I answer by saying that if these values are *truer* in any sense, they will assert themselves through conflicts in course of time.

I shall now have a reading over some other theories, without a long discussion on any of them.

The approbative theories of the different kinds generally assert someone's approval to be the basis of a moral judgment. So far they seem to meet with the emotivist. But they affirm, in addition, a test of validity of ethical statements, which consists in the actual presence of the approval behind them.

These theories are three in number. The type we know as the moral sentiment theory grounds the moral predicate on the sentiment of the individual agent. This sentiment contains emotion, but still some reflection as well which prevents it from being too private and partial. The judgments are obviously relative to a certain extent, but are in no way meaningless. Westermarek, Rogers and McDougall are among the exponents of this view.

Among the rest of its kinds there is the social approbative theory. It bases the moral precept on the approbation of society reflected in customs and social sanctions. The society in question may vary from time to time, still the individual is not the determinant of his own moral predicates. A force, external to his own, persuades him through his moral conscience. It is a larger self in which the individual forms a part.

The last is the Theological variety of the Approbative theory. This idea is driven home to our minds by Karl Barth, Emil Brunner and Niebuhr. According to this theory the validity of the moral predicates is determined by the divine dictates, which embody the true meaning of our selves. And I need not mention that in all its varieties the Approbative theory finds moral decision to reflect our person, whether





in a smaller or a wider sense of the term. For society as well as the Divine Self is recognised as the 'larger self' which is the true self of the individual.

Next I come to the affective theory of value. "If pleasantness is too abstract and restricted to suggest the rich variety of values, the motor-effective side of experience, in which pleasure itself belongs, is much broader and richer."<sup>1</sup> The affective theory, while agreeing with the general outlook of the hedonists, rests its conception on this part of human experience.

The theory, expounded by Santayana, finds value to rest on two distinct features. The material ground is the animal nature which is the spring of all morality. It is the cause determining the physical nature and the basic human constitution on which test and choice depend. But on the other side the moral precept is determined by the realm of essence which consists of the present character of things taken in relation to their ideal developments.

Yet value is not identical either with the basic determinants or with the essence as such. It rather consists in the favourable feeling of the agent as developed out of the present conditions towards the essence. "The ultimate intuitions", Santayana says, "are not opinions we hazard but preferences we feel."<sup>2</sup> But the basis of moral valuation is not mere impulse but some reflection as well. In fact, reflection and feeling are so mingled in moral life that reflection becomes more than a means to emotional ends, and it pays to harmonise and discriminate between impulses.

The realist conception given by Moore defines values as intrinsic and indefinable. The other exposition of the Realist theory is given by Hartmann. Hartmann combines feeling and objectivity in the moral sphere. The value is an embodiment of the value-sense which is the essence of one's existence as a "person" in the capacity for which he is a creative agent. The value is therefore real and objective, as determined by the essential mode of one's self. So Hartmann speaks of the "discovery" of values. The appre-

<sup>1</sup> Hill, *Contemporary Ethical Theories*.

<sup>2</sup> *Winds of Doctrine*, p. 144, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926.





ciation is an *a priori* intuition tinged with emotion, and he defines it as a primal immediate capacity to appreciate what is valuable.<sup>1</sup> Hartmann derives his theory mainly from the culminative effect of Plato's concept of *a priori* knowledge and the Kantian theory of subjective universality. A theory like this, however, cannot avoid the concept of self-realisation. My confusions about Moore's theory are never cleared up. Yet the intuitive attitude obviously refers to the reflection of the innermost self.

I will not discuss here the Deontological theory, which rests on a certain modification of the intuitive idea and is subject to a like interpretation. But even the pragmatic theory cannot be taken to mean a direct antagonism to our ideas. For its concept of shifting values as determined by the nature of our utility does not imply the denial of self-realisation, but only the lack of a consistent idea of self.

<sup>1</sup> Hartmann, *Ethics*, Vol. I, p. 221, London.





## CHAPTER I

### THE CONCEPT OF VALUE IN ANCIENT IDEALISM

#### *Section 1*

The first exponent of idealism in Western philosophy is no other than Plato. In fact, we should say, he had propounded a philosophical theory which was later developed as idealism. But here we proceed to discuss the philosophy of Plato, for he offers us a theory of value to which he was in a way introduced by Socrates.

#### *Section 2*

It is quite sure that Plato deals with the problem of value. His work as a whole is mainly concerned with the problem of good. The terms 'good' and 'valuable' in their common use mean the same thing. That which acquires some significance by approximating to an ideal attains value, and is called valuable or good. Of course, one may distinguish the two terms and use them in quite different senses. But Plato, so far as I have understood him, does not conceive of any such distinction. For, as we see, his Idea of the Good is at once the source of reality and value of every phenomenon in the world. As Gurbe rightly states in his *Plato's Thought*<sup>1</sup>: "The hopeless scepticism of the sophists abolished all values—moral, social, political and also metaphysical and physical. Plato comes to re-establish these values, and in order to do that the first thing he had to do was to find out an objective, universally valid reality, and this he found in 'Forms' or 'Ideas' (and the Idea of the Good is a representation of these)."

<sup>1</sup> Gurbe, p. 3.





Now this is a point which needs further explanation. And we can best explain it by reference to some Platonic texts. We have it in his *Philebus* :

“ *Socrates*—And no one can deny that all percipient beings desire and hunt after good, and are eager to catch and have the good about them, and care not for the attainment of anything which is not accompanied by good.

*Protarchus*—That is undeniable.”<sup>1</sup>

The good Plato speaks of here is no other than the highest good, i.e., the Idea of the Good, a fact which is evident from the two characteristics he ascribes to it. The good is described not only as the most desirable, but as being complete in itself and perfect at the same time.<sup>2</sup> There are also statements in his *Républic* which define good as an object of desire for all, though it is stated to be not being consciously followed by most people. Thus we read :

“ *Socrates*—Of this then, which every soul of man pursues and makes the end of all his actions, having a presentiment that there is such an end, and yet hesitating because neither knowing the nature nor having the same assurance of this as of other things, and therefore losing whatever good there is in other things,—of a principle such and so great as this ought the best man in our State, to whom everything is entrusted, to be in the darkness of ignorance?

Certainly not, he said.”<sup>3</sup>

“ Good is the universal object of desire.”<sup>4</sup> Everyone aspires in every action of his life after good as he understands it, though the approach may be unconscious as it is in most cases, even wrong due to ignorance of the agent himself. Now, the highest good in the Platonic treatment is the Idea of the Good, and every sort of good that we aim at ultimately resolves itself into the Idea of the Good. A passage from the *Republic* may be stated in this connection :

<sup>1</sup> Steph. 20-21 (Jowett. Vol. 4. p. 586, 3rd edition).

<sup>2</sup> See the same context of *Philebus*.

<sup>3</sup> *Republic*, Book 6, st. 506 (Jowett, Vol. 3, p. 206, 3rd edn.).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Book 4, st. 438 (Jowett, p. 129).



"*Socrates*—For you have often been told that the idea of good is the highest knowledge, and that all other things become useful and advantageous only by their use of this. You can hardly be ignorant that of this I was about to speak, concerning which, as you have often heard me to say, we know so little; and without which, any other knowledge or possession of any kind will profit us nothing. Do you think that the possession of all other things is of any value if we do not possess the good? or the knowledge of all other things if we have no knowledge of beauty and goodness?

*Adeimantus*—Assuredly not."<sup>1</sup>

While discussing the Idea of the Good in the same context, Plato reminds us of an 'old story' that when there is a 'many' of a certain kind, there must exist along with them, an absolute of that kind, which contains the essence of the 'many'. Let us look into the text itself:

"*Socrates*—The old story that there is a many beautiful and a many good, and so of other things which we describe and define; to all of them the term 'many' is applied. . . . And there is an absolute beauty and an absolute good, and of other things to which the term 'many' is applied there is an absolute; for they may be brought under a single idea, which is called the essence of each."<sup>2</sup>

So, the Idea of the Good or absolute goodness being the essence of all sorts of good, the highest good is the ultimate object for which we act either consciously as in the case of the philosophers, or unconsciously as in the case of common people because any kind of good we aim at derives its goodness ultimately from the Good. It is therefore an absolute ideal, and so, the Idea of the Good represents the highest ideal or value. We will find in due course that, the absolute good<sup>3</sup> and the absolute beauty, which are taken to be the source of all that are beautiful and good, and the standard of all beauty and goodness on earth, are no other

<sup>1</sup> *Republic*, Book 6, st. 506 (Jowett, p. 205).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, st. 507 (Jowett, p. 207).

<sup>3</sup> I mean moral good.





than the Idea of the Good itself in its different aspects. And so, the Idea of the Good is the ultimate standard of all values, moral, aesthetic or any other.

### Section 3

We may say that in Plato's philosophy there is no distinction between reality and value. In other words, according to Plato, the highest reality embodies the highest value or the highest value is endowed with supreme reality. The Idea of the Good which is the source of all values also causes and sustains all phenomena in the world. In that part of the *Republic* which is specially devoted to a discussion of the Idea of the Good, the Idea of the Good is compared with the sun in the heavens. Here we are told that the sun in the heavens is the cause of everything in the world that is perceivable, and is its sustainer. The sun produces light which makes vision possible and also the eye that sees. Such is the Idea of the Good. It is the final cause and sustainer of all things knowable (Plato is not an agnostic), and at the same time it produces reason that realises it.<sup>1</sup> As light is nothing but the sun itself, so reason is a reflection of the Idea of the Good. And so it is stated: "The soul is like the eye; when resting upon that on which truth and being shine, the soul perceives and understands, and is radiant with intelligence; but when turned towards the twilight of becoming and perishing, then she has opinion only, and goes blinking about, and is first of one opinion and then of another, and seems to have no intelligence."<sup>2</sup>

The Idea of the Good is the highest reality. We have already found it to be the supreme value. It is that which 'philosophers', the best of mankind, aim at through dialectic. The soul of a man is truly at home with this alone. As stated in the *Phaedrus*: "The reason why the soul exhibits this exceeding eagerness to behold the plain of truth is that pasturage is found there, which is suited to the highest part of the soul."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Republic*, Book 6, sts. 506-11 (Jowett, pp. 206-13).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Book 4, st. 508 (Jowett, p. 209).

<sup>3</sup> *Phaedrus*, st. 248 (Jowett, Vol. 1, p. 454, 3rd edn.).



*Section 4*

So far we have only an introduction to the Idea of the Good. There is an elaborate discussion of the Idea of the Good throughout the Dialogues. But it is not possible for me to consider the whole of it. I shall try only to outline the essential characters which an object must be endowed with in order to be good. But before we do so, we must know what spheres of our life contain ample scope for the appreciation of value. That is to say, in what contexts of life good is realised in some form or other. Now, the Idea of the Good is the highest metaphysical value. It is the source of all value and reality in the world. The Idea of the Good as such can be realised by pure intellect alone. This realisation is a knowledge of the bare 'forms' or 'ideas' freed from everything sensuous. This contemplation of the Idea of the Good is called dialectic.<sup>1</sup> But this sort of knowledge is possible only for 'philosophers', the wisest men in society. Plato deals with this question in the *Republic* and some other Dialogues.

Yet there is scope for the realisation of good in ordinary moral life. The ideal in moral life is happiness and the principle of action is justice. Plato does not distinguish between ethical and political life. So he conceives that our ideal in moral life is to live in a perfectly organised State. A State is perfect, that is, just, only when the different communities which form its constituent parts perfectly perform the function attached to each and thus maintain the consistency and perfection of the whole. We may justify our statements by quotations from Plato himself :

"But that our aim in founding the State was not the disproportionate happiness of any one class, but the greatest happiness of the Whole ; we thought that in a State which is ordered with a view to the good of the Whole we should be more likely to find justice, and in the ill-ordered State injustice."<sup>2</sup>

. A State is perfect or just when its guardians are wise, and soldiers brave. The common people only need to submit

<sup>1</sup> *Republic*, Book 4, st. 420 (Jowett, pp. 107-08).

<sup>2</sup> *Philebus*, st. 58 (Jowett, Vol. 4, p. 633, 3rd edn.).





to the rule of the superiors in the State. Temperance is a virtue which must extend to the community as a whole so as to produce harmony and order.

A State is just when it is organised with these virtues of wisdom, courage and temperance. We may conclude therefore that the moral ideal of man in the ordinary level of his life consists in working for the perfect maintenance of the State as a whole which is possible by the correct performance of the task attached to the position he occupies in society. Justice is the principle according to which we should act, and happiness would follow from justice. In a perfect State, as Plato says, justice and happiness will coincide.<sup>1</sup>

It appears from what we have discussed that Plato maintains a distinction between a life of pure contemplation and ethical and political life. But, as a matter of fact, the goodness of ethical life—the ideal of the perfectly ordered State—is itself derived from the Idea of the Good. This is also evident from the fact that a perfect State can be constituted and ruled only by philosophers or dialecticians. The dialectician, as Plato says, has the true knowledge of the Idea of the Good, the perfectly organised whole. With that notion he must come down and form accordingly the ideal system in the world.

“Until Philosophers are kings, or kings and princes of this world have the spirit and power of Philosophy, and political greatness and wisdom meet in one, and those common natures who pursue either to the exclusion of the other are compelled to stand aside, cities will never have rest from their evils,—no, nor the human race, as I believe,—and then only will this our State have a possibility of life and behold the light of the day.”<sup>2</sup> The Idea of the Good cannot be perfectly realised in the world of senses and so remains far from us.<sup>3</sup> Yet the ideal State can be formed after the pattern of this Idea, and the philosopher alone is competent to do that. Others are only to submit calmly to his rule.

<sup>1</sup> *Republic*, Book 2 (Jowett's introduction and analysis).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Book 5, st. 473 (Jowett, pp. 170-71).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Book 10, st. 596 (Jowett, pp. 307-09).





So we see that the ideals of ethical (or political) and contemplative lives are not actually distinguished. The Idea of the Good is the supreme reality and value which as the absolute standard of perfection ascribes value to our ethical life. Ethical or political good is in fact a reflection of the Idea of the Good in the material life of the world. We may find a gradation of value to exist according to Plato—the metaphysical concept of the Idea of the Good as representing the highest value, while ethical goodness represents the lower and relative value inasmuch as it is understood with reference to the former. And not only in the ideal State of Plato, but even in the imperfect society of ours, the element of goodness, however meagre, is ultimately due to the Idea of the Good. In moral life the ideal of a perfect State is our ideal, and a community or any other element is good or valuable so far as it contributes to this ideal. Plato describes the ideal of moral life also as happiness, which, he thinks, follows from the perfect ordering and working of the different communities of the State, and which is the object of desire for all in this stage of life. But an analysis of the concept of happiness in the true sense of the term, tends towards the conclusion that happiness, as defined by Plato, can be achieved by the philosopher alone,<sup>1</sup> though it is stated in another context that the philosopher cannot be happy in this world.<sup>2</sup>

The Idea of the Good is said to have three characteristic features, and these are—Measure, Truth and Beauty.<sup>3</sup> As Beauty is one of the fundamental features of the highest good, there seems to be a possibility of appreciation of the ideal in our aesthetic life as well. Indeed, the Dialogues like the *Phaedrus* and the *Symposium* strike such notes. Though in his *Republic* Plato discards every possibility for a poet or a painter to approach reality in itself, in the *Phaedrus* he considers the earthly sights of beauty to be capable of directing our soul towards the one Beauty which is the Idea of the Good. As he says: “But this is the privilege

<sup>1</sup> *Laws*, Book 12, st. 957 (Jowett, Vol. 5, p. 347, 3rd edn.) and *Philebus*, st. 62a (Jowett).

<sup>2</sup> *Republic*, Book 6, st. 496 (Jowett, pp. 194-95).

<sup>3</sup> See *Philebus* and *Republic*.



of beauty, that being the loveliest she is also the most palpable to sight."<sup>1</sup> So we infer that the earthly sights of beautiful things have got a relative value, so far as they help us know the Real. But these earthly beauties have not the appeal of eternity to every mind. A soul which is corrupt and has forgotten all about its experience in heaven, finds nothing but sensuous glamour in them. It is only to a heart that contains (though faintly and unconsciously) the memories of the Eternal that the worldly sights represent the supreme Beauty.

"Now he who is not newly initiated or who has become corrupted does not easily rise out of this world to the sight of true beauty in the other: . . . . But he whose initiation is recent, and who has been the spectator of many glories in the other world, is amazed when he sees anyone having a godlike face or form, which is the expression of divine beauty."<sup>2</sup>

Besides, the *Symposium* makes an approach to Beauty (i.e. *reality*) through love as is evident from the following dialogue: "*Socrates*—Then in wanting the beautiful, love wants also the good?

I cannot refute you, *Socrates*, said *Agathon*:—Let us assume that what you say is true."<sup>3</sup>

So we conclude that the earthly visions of beautiful objects and also love possess some value as they lead us in a way to the contemplation of the absolute value. Yet we must say that such values are relative by all means.

### Section 5

We shall now consider the nature of the Good, which is, to a considerable extent, realised in our moral life, and is perfectly realised in the philosopher's contemplation of the Idea of the Good, and which is also reflected in a way in the earthly sights of beauty and in love.

<sup>1</sup> *Phaedrus*, st. 250 (Jowett, p. 457).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, sts. 250-51 (Jowett, p. 457).

<sup>3</sup> *Symposium*, st. 201 (Jowett, Vol. 1, pp. 571-72, 3rd edn.).





The Platonic concept of the highest good is in the first place the concept of a whole, which is at the same time a systematic whole. We have been introduced to this character of the Good in our discussion of the ethical ideal of the perfect State.<sup>1</sup> That the Idea of the Good is the concept of a whole is evidently clear from the sixth book of the *Republic*, where it is described as the cause and sustainer of everything in the universe. The Idea of the Good is not a mere whole, but is a systematic and perfectly organized whole, a fact which is clear from 'measure' being defined as one of the essential features of the Idea. The *Philebus* defines 'measure' to be the reality about things. We have reality only when the chaotic negative flow of the universe is organised through the organising principle of mind, or, in other words, when measure is introduced into the chaos. It brings out in this way the utmost possibility of every situation in order to spare not a single positive value. While discussing the perfectly good life as a mixture of pleasure and wisdom, Socrates states: "That any want of measure and symmetry in any mixture whatever must always of necessity be fatal, both to the elements and to the mixture, which is then not a mixture, but only a confused medley which brings confusion on the possessor of it."<sup>2</sup> God is described in the *Laws* as the most perfect measure.

The ideal State as pictured in the *Republic* is a perfectly *organised* State. This we have already seen. Harmony is the essential characteristic of this State. In fact, a State, which is ideally conceived, is not a conglomeration of its different parts, but is a *system*. That is to say, the different elements work for the Whole, and the Whole works for the parts. Justice, which is defined as the highest virtue,<sup>3</sup> is the 'all virtue', and is a character that grows in the society out of the systematic performance of all its parts, as well as in the individual soul when every part of its nature acts according to its own perfection and at the same time for the perfection of the Whole. Justice as the standard of our

<sup>1</sup> See Sec. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Philebus*, sts. 64-65 (Jowett, pp. 641-42).

<sup>3</sup> *Republic*, Book 2.



happiness and activity is nothing but a manifestation of the principle of measurement in our moral life. Happiness, as defined by Plato, expresses the ideal harmony of several virtues, pleasure and other elements of human life. This is directly proved from the fact of justice being followed by happiness, for it is said that in a perfect State justice and happiness will coincide.<sup>1</sup>

So is Beauty, one of the essential features of the Idea of the Good. A single quotation from the *Philebus* will serve our purpose :

“ *Socrates*—And now the power of the Good has retired into the region of the beautiful; for measure and symmetry are beauty and virtue all the World over.”<sup>2</sup>

The character of the Good as a system is further emphasised by the recognition of mathematics as a means to the realisation of the Idea of the Good in several Dialogues of Plato.<sup>3</sup> Mathematics is a science of numbers, and deals with measurement and order. And so the highest object of its contemplation cannot but be embodied in perfect measure and harmony. Though Plato allows dialectic alone to take the final step in our approach to the Idea of the Good, mathematics is nevertheless competent to take us far towards it.

The *Philebus* describes the organising principle that harmonises the chaotic flow of the universe as a principle of mind. The world is governed not by chance, nor does it move mechanically. It is guided by mind or reason.<sup>4</sup> The principle of mind is stated to be the organiser of the universe, and also as the supreme cause of the World. As Socrates says : “ Should we not be wise in adopting the other view and maintaining that there is in the universe a mighty infinite and an adequate limit, of which we have often spoken, as well as a presiding cause of no mean power, which orders and arranges years and seasons and months, and may be justly called wisdom and mind?”<sup>5</sup> And as none but the Idea of

<sup>1</sup> *Republic*, Book 1 (Jowett, p. 34).

<sup>2</sup> *Philebus*, sts. 64-65 (Jowett, p. 642).

<sup>3</sup> *Republic*, Books 6 and 7 (Jowett); *Philebus*, st. 57 (Jowett, p. 633).

<sup>4</sup> *Philebus*, st. 28 (Jowett, p. 596).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, st. 30 (Jowett, p. 598).



the Good is Reality and the supreme cause of everything, we may easily draw the conclusion that the Idea of the Good is of the nature of mind.

Yet this characteristic of the Real and its absolute desirability do not deprive it of its objectivity. The objectivity of the Idea is derived from the definition of it as the supreme cause and sustainer of all things, and from its eternity and absolute necessity. Objectivity, as we know, consists in universality and necessity. As regards the universality of the Idea of the Good, there is hardly any doubt, and so also regarding its necessity, which is perfectly implied by the existents of the world, as it is the only source of all the worth they possess. A further evidence of the Idea of the Good is deducible from the objectivity of the 'ideas' of which it is an embodiment. The 'ideas', as we know, are the universal 'forms' of the objects and beings in the universe. They are, we may say, the eternal concepts, as they exist apart from all their sensuous manifestations. Now, the *Meno* and the *Protagoras* (which are sometimes described as 'Socratic Dialogues') and also some other Dialogues like the *Phaedo* define knowledge as a process of recollection of 'ideas' from a previous state of existence. This obviously implies the eternal existence of the 'ideas' of which we are only reminded through the process of good teaching. And so the Idea of the Good which is an embodiment of all 'ideas' must necessarily be objective. The discussion of the *Phaedrus* about the capacity of earthly visions to remind a mind of the one Beauty is also based on the process of recollection. The worldly beauties represent the highest Beauty to a soul whose memory of the eternal Beauty is fresh and has not been corrupted.

The universal desirability of the Idea of the Good and its being of the nature of mind possibly save the Platonic theory of reality and value from being agnostic. These only indicate that the highest good is not anything indefinable, or something which the human mind can never approach, though the highest good cannot be fully realised in the world. The philosopher may know its nature, and may attempt, with some success, to manifest it through the formation of a State.





Yet the ideal always transcends the actual. But the point is that Reality is not unknowable. Human mind is not by nature incapable of the knowledge of the Real. This is a fact that may be derived from the statement in the *Philebus*<sup>1</sup> which regards the supreme mind (the Idea of the Good) as the cause of the minds in the world, though the former surpasses the latter in purity, greatness and power to an immeasurable extent.

So far we have found the highest value to be an ideal—a systematic and objective whole, which is of the nature of mind. But the most significant characteristic of the concept of value is yet to be found. It is the element of insight or knowledge in the Good. This, as we will see, is not only one of the fundamental features of the Idea of the Good, but is, to be precise, the whole of it. All the elements in the Idea are characterised with knowledge. Each of the features of the Idea of the Good and all the means towards its realisation resolve themselves into it, for when analysed, they are found to be nothing other than its manifestation.

This intellectual attitude was peculiar to the ancient Greeks, and Plato deduced it almost directly from Socrates. Taylor in his 'Plato' makes a distinction between the 'Platonic' and the 'Socratic' Dialogues.<sup>2</sup> *Ion*, *Lysis*, *Charmides*, *Meno*, *Gorgias* and some other Dialogues are called 'Socratic', while the Dialogues like *Phaedo*, *Symposium*, *Protagoras*, *Republic*, *Phaedrus*, *Philebus* and *Laws*, etc., are called 'Platonic'. This distinction may be due to the greater Socratic influence that the former group of Dialogues shows. However, I am not to consider here the justification of this distinction. But the Dialogues, on the whole, are marked ultimately by one fundamental characteristic in spite of their differences. The mere intellectual tendency of the 'Socratic' Dialogues is not actually overcome in the 'Platonic' ones. It is true that Plato, in order to exhibit the richness of the Idea of the Good, and to leave for us greater scope for the appreciation of the ideal, makes

<sup>1</sup> *Philebus* (Jowett).

<sup>2</sup> *Plato, the Man and His Works*.





several approaches to it through beauty, justice, love and music. But they are, in fact, mere manifestations of knowledge as such.

Of course, in the 'Socratic' Dialogues there is recognition of goodness as nothing but knowledge. The 'Socratic' Dialogues are mainly concerned with the concept of a moral Good. But virtue or moral goodness as it is conceived there is nothing but knowledge.

To state an instance from the *Meno*: "*Socrates*—If then virtue is a quality of the soul, and is admitted to be profitable, it must be wisdom or prudence, since none of the things of the soul are either profitable or hurtful in themselves, but they are all made profitable or hurtful by the addition of wisdom or of folly; and therefore if virtue is profitable, virtue must be a sort of wisdom or prudence?

*Meno*—I quite agree."<sup>1</sup>

The *Charmides*, another 'Socratic' Dialogue, which contains a discussion of temperance, resolves temperance into self-knowledge. The *Gorgias* tells us that all life exhibits reason while morality reflects it in one particular sphere. And from the *Lysis* we know that knowledge is the only thing which can make us useful and good.<sup>2</sup>

Even in the *Protagoras* which Taylor describes as a 'Platonic' Dialogue, courage is defined as the true knowledge of what is and what is not to be feared. The way of the expression of the true nature of the virtues is through the knowledge of what is our real interest, *i.e.* our good.

As it is given in the *Republic*, the only way to the Good is through intellect. The discussion of the nature of the ideal State and its realisation is a case in point. The ideal State, as Plato says, must be just, and justice is an outcome of the perfect functioning of the different parts of society. But the State to be just in this sense ought to be ruled by the wise, while the rest of the people are merely to submit to the rule. It is insight that is to guide us throughout our life. Philosophy or dialectic, as we have seen, is true insight into the nature of the Idea of the Good.

<sup>1</sup> *Meno*, st. 88 (Jowett, Vol. 2, p. 50, 3rd edn.).

<sup>2</sup> *Lysis*, st. 210 (Jowett, Vol. 1, p. 58, 3rd edn.).



Hence, it is only a philosopher, who knows reality as such, that is competent to produce the ideal State, which is to be formed after the pattern of the Idea so far as it is practicable. Unless kings are philosophers and philosophers are kings the ideal State will remain unrealised. With all this we are already acquainted. It is true that Plato, in the so-called 'Platonic' Dialogues, suggests several other approaches to the Idea of the Good through beauty and love as we find in the *Phaedrus* and the *Symposium*. But when these concepts are analysed, they are found to be nothing but mere modifications of reason and knowledge, so far as the true Platonic senses of these terms are concerned. To take the case of beauty first. As he says in the *Phaedrus*, to an uncorrupted mind the earthly sights of beauty appear with a shadow of eternity, for it finds in them something that directs the mind to the One Beauty which is Reality itself.<sup>1</sup> One may tend to infer from this that an aesthetic appreciation is itself capable of conveying to us the nature of the Good. But as a matter of truth, the earthly sights take us to the realisation of the highest Beauty through the process of recollection, which is evidently a process of knowledge, as we learn from the *Meno*.

The concept of love has the same implication. As we are told in the *Symposium*:

"And these two customs, one the love of youth, and the other the practice of philosophy and virtue in general, ought to meet in one, and then the beloved may honourably indulge the lover... the one capable of communicating wisdom and virtue, the other seeking to acquire them with a view to education and wisdom; when the two laws of love are fulfilled and meet in one—then, and then only, may the beloved yield with honour to the lover."<sup>2</sup>

Plato not only traces the way to the Idea of the Good through intellect alone, but the highest good or Reality as he conceives it, is an embodiment of reason. In the *Philebus* he defines Reality as a pure logical existence,

<sup>1</sup> *Phaedrus* (Jowett).

<sup>2</sup> *Symposium*, st. 184 (Jowett, p. 554).



open only to dialectic or reason. The Idea of the Good is characterised by measure, which is nothing but reason itself.

The world of senses takes its form according to the Idea only when measure is introduced into it, *i.e.* as we have already seen, when the chaotic negative flow of the universe is harmonised by the organising principle of the Mind. This Mind, being the absolute mind, through the action of which alone the Idea takes place in the world, is necessarily embodied in perfect reason. Several statements may be offered from the Dialogues. As Socrates enquires in the *Philebus*:

“Whether all this which they call the universe is left to the guidance of unreason and chance medley, or on the contrary, as our fathers have declared, ordered and governed by a marvellous intelligence and wisdom?”<sup>1</sup> The affirmative answer to the question is suggested throughout the Dialogues.

Again, as we have quoted before: “Should we not be wise in adopting the other view and maintaining that there is in the universe a mighty infinite and an adequate limit, of which we have often spoken, as well as a presiding cause of no mean power, which orders and arranges years and seasons and months, and may be justly called wisdom and mind?”<sup>2</sup> The other feature of the Idea of the Good, *viz.*, Beauty, is also a modification of reason.

“For measure and symmetry are beauty,”<sup>3</sup> and so beauty is another name for reason.

An approach to the ideal is possible through mathematics, a science of number and measure. Yet mathematics cannot take us into the heart of reality, a task for which dialectic alone is competent. Plato thinks this to be due to the lack of the power of reasoning in the mathematicians.<sup>4</sup> As regards the astronomers, for instance, he says: “They investigate the numbers of the harmonies which are heard, but they never attain to problems—that is to say, they never

<sup>1</sup> *Philebus*, st. 28 (Jowett, p. 596).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* (Jowett, p. 598).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, st. 64 (Jowett, p. 642).

<sup>4</sup> *Republic*, Book 7, sts. 531-32 (Jowett, pp. 234-35).



reach the natural harmonies of number, or reflect why some numbers are harmonious and others not."<sup>1</sup>

The ethical concept of the ideal State, which is a perfectly harmonious whole, is, as we have seen, the ideal of pure reason. The principle of justice, which is the highest of all virtues, and is defined as the 'all virtue', is certainly a manifestation of Measure, and happiness follows from it. Even pleasure, to which Plato assigns a place in the ideal State, is worth its name, when it is of any use to reason.<sup>2</sup>

Hence we see that reason is the true nature of the Idea of the Good, and it is realised through intellect alone. Reason determines the value of everything. It is reason which pertains to the real value of our life, for the ideal life is a life of pure contemplation. The philosopher is the ideal man in the State, and is a person who lives in pure contemplation of the Good. He alone has the appreciation of Beauty and Truth. It is only through him that the ideal may be sought to be realised in the world.

To sum up, reason embodies the absolute standard of moral and aesthetic values. Our life in society, as we see, is perfect in measure of its determination by reason. And this is a fact which is expressed by the amount of order (harmony) it exhibits. A State is just so far as it is harmonised, and it approaches the ideal so far as it is just.

Also beauty is reason in its true sense. So an object is beautiful to the extent that it is characterised with symmetry or measure, *i.e.* with reason.

The conclusion regarding the concept of value in Plato's philosophy to which we are led by all this may be stated in a single remark. As we should say, in Plato's theory of value reason or contemplation occupies the highest place. The Idea of the Good which is the absolute value and reality, according to Plato, is no other than pure reason. The highest value therefore is an ideal, objective, systematic Whole, and is characterised with reason and is open to intellect alone. The Idea of the Good being the absolute value, our moral ideal, the sights of beauty and also love and even mathematics possess a relative value so far as they are determined by it.

<sup>1</sup> *Republic*, Book 7, st. 531 (Jowett, p. 234).

<sup>2</sup> *Gorgias*.



*Section 6*

Plato's theory of reality is a theory of value. Or, we may say, value is for him the highest reality. The essence of reality is ' Good ' or ' Value '. The Idea of the Good, which is Reality, also signifies the highest value. It embodies the ideal perfection of everything in the world of facts and experience. Indeed, the very purpose of the universe is to bring every positive value out of every single situation. As Plato states in the *Philebus*, the rich details of the concrete life must be arranged so as to form a single harmonious Whole, if it is to conform to the Idea of the Good, so that no single positive value should be spared and come to conflict with other values. The true knowledge, he says in the *Gorgias*, is the knowledge of good and evil, that is, of value. Plato gives us a theory of value, that has been pioneer in the field of philosophy of value. He introduces a new meaning into human life. We receive from Plato a concept of life which is rich with beauty, love, justice and reason. The world in its perfection is the realm of values, *i.e.*, the Idea of the Good. It is a realm in which alone virtue and beauty are truly realised. As we have already seen, the way to the Idea lies through morality, knowledge, and aesthetic appreciation, for our moral, intellectual and aesthetic actions drive towards the one end, and have all their worth with reference to that. Every element in the universe has a place in the ideal, as the Idea of the Good represents a perfectly organised Whole. Of course, it is true that the highest value does not inhere in the elements as crude facts but include them only by virtue of their ideal perfection, and the facts are valuable only so far as they accord with the ideal. Thus in the place of the subjective, relative and pragmatic theory of value of the Sophists, we have a theory of eternal and objective value.

In the Platonic system, the ideal State, as it is conceived, attaches value to every community in society. Each of the classes has its particular virtue, which consists in the correct performance of its particular task, and the excellence of the community consists in attaining the virtue in question.





But the possibility of the realisation of the Idea in the concrete spheres of life at last vanishes with absolute emphasis on intellect. This we have already discussed. Philosophy or pure rational insight which is peculiar to the wise men in the State, is the only way to take us to the heart of Reality. So the remaining communities, in spite of realising the virtues attached to their particular positions, remain far from the appreciation of Idea of the Good. Moreover, as the virtues like courage<sup>1</sup> are truly realised through insight, it is doubtful how far a particular class can realise its own virtue without the help of a philosopher. But then all the credit of the attainment of that virtue would go to the philosopher, and there will be no point in saying that every class has its peculiar excellence. In short, as we have seen, for Plato the ultimate value or excellence (as Plato says) of a particular class consists in the attainment of the particular virtue allotted to it. Thus temperance is the excellence of the commoners and courage is the virtue of the soldiers in the State. This we can express in another way by saying, that value consists in self-realisation and a person can perfectly realise his own self by the correct discharge of the virtue demanded of the position he occupies in society or the State. But the infinite love Plato has for intellect comes in the way of such an exposition. For he reduces all virtues to wisdom, and so, a philosopher alone is capable of knowing what is one's good. But then a man, in order to know his good, whatever it is, must be raised to the level of a philosopher, and if it be so, there is no sense in saying that a man in his particular position realises his virtue in any way. If a man in order to realise his self (as he belongs to a particular position in the society) must be asked to transcend it and to become a philosopher, then either there is no virtue, *i.e.* self-realisation in the common level of life or all values are realised only in the life of consummate contemplation and in order to realise the virtues, all men must become philosophers. Plato suggests several approaches to Reality and specially considers morality and beauty in this connection.

<sup>1</sup> *Protagoras* (Jowett, Vol. 1, 3rd edn.).





But I think he needs to do so for the sake of consistency as he conceives the Idea of the Good to have three main features—truth, beauty and measure. But the moral and the beautiful ultimately resolve into the intellectual, and so the apparently rich and concrete life of value is found to be a life of mere contemplation. It is true that the Idea of the Good includes everything, even pleasure, in itself. But in it they no more exist with their characteristic peculiarities, but are completely transformed so as to express reason alone. Of course, we shall later come to face some wider conception of reason, which transcends the limit of mere contemplative knowledge. But Plato, as we see, understands by reason only a capacity for pure contemplation and ascribes it to the 'wise men' alone. Therefore, it seems that he renders the Idea of the Good void of a rich content and also curtails the different virtues of their peculiar excellences by reducing them all to manifestations of reason.

#### Section 7

Our discussion of the ancient idealist theory of value will, however, remain incomplete without reference to Aristotle. It is true that Aristotle is not an idealist, but a realist. His metaphysics is by all means a theory of realism. Even his ethical ideal of happiness, so far as ordinary people of the world are concerned, is an empirical ideal, as we find it in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. It is the object of social science, and consists in fulfilling our moral duties. It has no reference to any ideal beyond the realm of our experience, and so there is no trace of idealism about it. But here we are not concerned with this part of his ethics or with his metaphysics. We are concerned only with those portions of his works which bear the Platonic tradition and definitely strike an idealistic note.

In the first place, we would mention the name of the *Protrepticus*, a work of Aristotle, which is lost. Iamblichus recovered a part of it. But as no English version of this book is available, I have to depend solely on Jaeger's *Aristotle*. The book contains some important passages from the *Protrepticus* which the author has





translated for his own use. The *Protrepticus*, as Jaeger shows, is more in the line of Plato than of the other works of Aristotle and exhibits the Platonic emphasis on intellect. This work is, in fact, inspired by the faith in the absolute power of knowledge to raise the philosopher to the level unattainable by the common run of men. The whole philosophy of the *Protrepticus* turns on the concept of 'Phronesis' which means here the same thing as it does in Plato. 'Phronesis' in this context means the principle of pure contemplation, which, according to Plato, is divine in us. It is in fact, as Jaeger suggests, the creative apprehension of pure goodness through the inner intuition of the soul, and is, at the same time, the apprehension of pure being. Aristotle changed the meaning of the concept in his *Nicomachean Ethics*<sup>1</sup> where it signifies the habitual urge of mind to deliberate practically about everything concerning human weal or woe. But in the *Protrepticus* the Platonic sense of the term remains. It is based on the metaphysical ethics of Plato, and indicates a unity of being and value.

In the *Protrepticus* Measure is one of the features of the highest good as it is for Plato. Aristotle ascribes here to his ethics a mathematical exactness, though his later ethical work (*Nicomachean Ethics*) affords to it only a general rule. Like Plato's remark in the *Laws* that God is the measure of all things, there is a statement of Aristotle's in the *Statesman* (another work lost) that "God is the most exact measure". *What is* and *What Ought to be* are identical, and human actions are done with direct reference to the highest value. But the *Nicomachean Ethics* denies the possibility of the highest good in our moral and political life, and leaves it only for the 'wise men' to achieve. Of course the sole emphasis on intellect is Platonic. But unlike Aristotle in his *Nicomachean Ethics*, Plato never conceives an absolute distinction between the spheres of ethics and metaphysics, and for Plato moral life derives its goodness directly from the Idea of the Good.

<sup>1</sup> *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 6.





The *Eudemian Ethics* of Aristotle, however, seems to be inspired by the *Protrepticus*. Here happiness is, of course, the highest ideal, and depends, as we find in the *Protrepticus*, on 'Phronesis' (in the Platonic sense of the term), virtue and pleasure. But 'Phronesis' is still the ruling principle over all science and knowledge. It converts the eternal good to ethical activity and applies it to the details of practice. Morality is impossible without 'Phronesis'. The point on which the *Eudemian Ethics* differs from the ethics of Plato is its idea of the contemplation of God instead of the contemplation of the 'Ideas' or the Idea of the Good as is found in Plato. As the *Eudemian Ethics* conceives, the highest object of contemplation is not the Good, but God. The influence of the *Protrepticus* on the *Eudemian Ethics* can be shown by one quotation from each, and in both of these we shall recognise the Platonic tradition at work:

"One part of the soul is reason. This is the natural ruler and judge of things concerning us. The nature of the other part is to follow it and submit to its rule."<sup>1</sup>

"Let it be assumed that the parts of the soul partaking of reason are two, but that they partake not in the same way, but the one by its natural tendency to command, the other by its natural tendency to obey and listen."<sup>2</sup>

The quotations are merely intended to exhibit the direct influence of the *Protrepticus* on the *Eudemian Ethics*. What we have tried, after the manner of Jaeger, is to show that in both the texts Aristotle retains the Platonic trend of thought. Reason is conceived to be the directive principle in an ideal life, and ethics is to derive its ideal from the metaphysical concept of the highest value. Even in the *Nicomachean Ethics* where he determines the moral to be an empirical one and keeps it far from the realisation of the absolute value, his conception of the highest realisation accords with the conception of Plato. It is only in a life of pure contemplation that true happiness is possible. And so in the end Aristotle comes round to his original conception of happiness, as we find in the *Eudemian Ethics*. According

<sup>1</sup> *Protrepticus*, p. 41/20 (Jaeger, p. 249).

<sup>2</sup> *Eudemian Ethics*, 1219b, 28 (Jaeger, p. 244).



to him, reason alone is capable of leading us to the heart of Reality, *i.e.*, to God, the contemplation of whom is restricted to the few ' wise men ' in the State.

So we may infer that though Aristotle in his *Nicomachean Ethics* is a realist concerning the morality of the common people, the highest value for him is a transcendental metaphysical ideal. And so far as the *Protrepticus* and the *Eudemian Ethics* (which certain scholars like Jaeger consider to be his earlier works, though others deny that Aristotle is the author of the *Eudemian Ethics*) are considered, the metaphysical concept of reality determines morality, and human actions are done and judged by direct reference to the highest value. It appears, therefore, that there is an idealistic trend in these works of Aristotle. And that he has not completely overcome this tendency is evident from the transcendental concept of happiness to which he returns at the end of his *Nicomachean Ethics*.



## CHAPTER II

### THE CONCEPT OF VALUE IN SPINOZA'S PHILOSOPHY

#### Section 1

To all appearance the philosophy of Spinoza is a philosophy of value. The motive behind his speculative attitude is indeed the urge in him for the highest value in human life. We may cite certain statements from his works in favour of this remark. Spinoza introduces his *Theologico-Political Treatise* as a work "containing certain discussions wherein is set forth that freedom of thought and speech not only may, without prejudice to piety and the public peace, be granted; but also may not without danger to piety and the public peace, be withheld."<sup>1</sup>

He also states in his *Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione*: "After experience has taught me that all the usual surroundings of social life are vain and futile; seeing that none of the objects of my fears contained in themselves anything either good or bad, except in so far as the mind is affected by them, I finally resolved to enquire whether there might be some real good having power to communicate itself, which would affect the mind singly, to the exclusion of all else."<sup>2</sup> And he continues: "I thus perceived that I was in a state of great peril, and I compelled myself to seek with all my strength for a remedy, however, uncertain it might be; as a sick man struggling with a deadly disease, when he sees that death will surely be upon him unless a remedy be found, is compelled to seek such a remedy with all his strength, inasmuch as his whole hope lies therein."<sup>3</sup> And his *Ethics* specially develops a discussion of the concept of goodness. He begins with the idea of the relative good as conceived by common people in ignorance and passes on

<sup>1</sup> *Works of Spinoza*, Vol. 1. (Elwes, Spinoza's introduction, edn. 1008).

<sup>2</sup> *Spinoza's Selections*. (Wild, p. 1 edn., 1930).

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 3.



to the conception of the absolute good, which he considers to be the highest value from the moral as well as the metaphysical point of view. Spinoza sets himself to the task of finding a way out of the sufferings of moral life, and considers the whole universe in this search. That he starts with a moral motive justifies his theory more as a theory of value, because he yearns not merely for knowledge, but for an appreciation or rather a realisation of the highest good. Indeed, neither a necessity of mere intellect, nor even an aesthetic need can have such a keen appeal to the human heart as a moral urge has. It is because "his whole hope lies therein" that a man strives with all his power to discover the highest moral value, and if it is also the metaphysical absolute, it is so only as an object of secondary significance to us. It is then only in search of the moral that we find out the metaphysical. Duff rightly contends, "Spinoza's point of view would, I think, be better expressed, by saying that only a moral principle can be universally willed, than by saying that only a principle capable of being universally willed can be a moral one."<sup>1</sup> Of course, as Duff says, Spinoza develops both the points, but he seems to establish his philosophy more according to the former than according to the latter. We agree with this interpretation, for, according to Spinoza, we seek for the universal, because, as we shall see, nothing short of the universal can satisfy the ultimate need of the moral. It is not the universal through which we approach the moral. Rather, we come to the universal because we find the moral value to be universal in its nature and to be one with the highest metaphysical reality. In his *Ethics* Kropotkin says, "Spinoza thus created a truly moral teaching permeated with deep moral feeling. Such was also his personal life."<sup>2</sup> And I think he was not very wrongly impressed. Indeed, as I have said above, no value which has not a moral approach can have an absolute appeal to human mind. For morality considers man as a whole, and so a value which is

<sup>1</sup> Duff, *Spinoza's Political and Ethical Philosophy*, p. 130, edn. 1903.

<sup>2</sup> Kropotkin, *Ethics*.



moral, is something after which the whole heart aspires and for which man strives with all his means. Any other value, be it of intellect or of beauty, appeals to a particular part of our nature, excluding the rest as out of its concern. Therefore, the fact that Spinoza begins with a motive which is exclusively moral, justifies our consideration of his philosophy as a treatment of the concept of absolute value. And as we shall see, for Spinoza the perfection of human life lies not in the mere intellectual apprehension of reality but in 'the intellectual love of God'.

### Section 2

Spinoza finds the urge for the realisation of a value in the very constitution of human nature. A human being, by virtue of his nature, seeks to realise in each of his actions his own good as he knows it. Nay, Spinoza would rather contend that the motive for self-preservation is no privilege of human beings over the rest of Nature. This *conatus* (strife) for preserving one's own being is common to the inanimate and animate alike. This *conatus* constitutes the essence of all. But in the case of man this effort is conscious, whereas it is blind in others. The aim of human life is happiness, which is a state of complete satisfaction of his *conatus*. ...

However, so far we have said very little about Spinoza's philosophy. I must pause to consider it to some extent and would briefly discuss the deterministic nature of his philosophy in order to see how the nature of everything follows from the nature of God with an absolute and divine necessity.

### Section 3

It must be admitted in the first place that no one can reach the heart of Spinoza's philosophy unless he has understood it to be an absolutely deterministic system. Everything in the universe, in each of its movements or thoughts, is determined by God and cannot be there except through Him. But the term 'deterministic' should not confuse us.



Spinoza's theory of determination implies no external determination. The world is controlled by God not in the fashion in which a prisoner, for instance, is compelled by the jailor to behave. The functions of the world are rather determined by God in a manner in which the conclusion is determined by its premises, or an effect by its cause. Everything follows from the nature of God with an absolute necessity and so the world with all its details is a necessary consequence of the nature of God. As Spinoza says: "Whatever is, is in the nature of God, and without God nothing can be or be conceived."<sup>1</sup>

To refer to his metaphysics, we find that by substance Spinoza understands the self-caused, self-existing being, and that there can be only one substance, which he calls God. Nature and Substance are used synonymously. The things and beings of the world are mere 'modes' of God, and by 'modes' he means those which can neither exist nor be conceived except through the Substance. The Substance, as defined, exists by the necessity of its own nature. But the 'modes' are not contingent, for they follow from the nature of the absolute necessary being with a perfect necessity. According to Spinoza, "Nothing in the universe is contingent, but all things are conditioned to exist and operate in a particular manner by the necessity of the divine nature".<sup>2</sup> Such is the case, because God is conceived to be the immanent and not the transient cause of the nature of things.<sup>3</sup> Spinoza conceives God not only as the *sole cause*, but also as the *Whole*. As God is the only substance in the universe, there can exist nothing beside Him, for if there be any, it would contradict His existence as the supreme infinite substance. For, in that case, there would exist something which does not follow from God, and this would inevitably make against the conception of the one supreme Being. The point he seeks to prove is justified by the statement, "Every substance is necessarily infinite".<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics* I, prop. 15 (Elwes, Vol. 2, p. 55, edn. 1908).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, prop. 29 (Elwes, p. 67).

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, prop. 18 (Elwes, p. 62).

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, prop. 8 (Elwes, p. 48).



For he says that to be finite is to be limited by something of its own nature. This is, of course, impossible for a Substance, not only because it contradicts the idea of Substance as self-caused, but also because it would imply the necessary existence (self-caused) of that which determines the Substance by virtue of the similarity of its nature with the said Substance. There will be thus two substances of the same nature. But an idea like this is simply absurd, for the sameness of their essence will at once render them into one. Moreover, finitude implies a partial negation according to Spinoza, for a finite object is necessarily conceived through something else. Therefore, it is inconceivable that Substance can be anything but infinite, while the existence of two infinities is a sheer impossibility. So it comes to this that *beside* God there is nothing and that God does not control the world from outside but works in and through it. The world, in short, is a manifestation of God.

Necessity is, however, the beginning and the end of the system of the universe and is also the characteristic of its supreme cause. God does not behave in this world in a fanciful manner, but He works with an absolute necessity. As we may quote from the works of Spinoza :

“ Things could not have been brought into being by God in any manner or in any order different from that which has in fact obtained.”<sup>1</sup> And this brings to light the implication of another contention of Spinoza, namely—“ God acts solely by the laws of his own nature and is not constrained by any one.”<sup>2</sup> God acts with a perfect necessity, for any one behaving with momentary wishfulness is certainly an imperfect being. But as there is nothing beside God to control Him, He must act according to the laws of His own nature. Whatever He does, He does necessarily and most perfectly. Things and actions of the world follow from the divine nature as its necessary consequences and are so far perfect. In fact, God as conceived by Spinoza hardly seems to be a theological God. God is rather the absolute substance which manifests a perfect necessity in and through its various

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, I prop. 33 (Elwes, p. 70).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, prop. 17 (Elwes, p. 59).





functions. Indeed, Kropotkin goes so far as to group Spinoza under one head with Bacon, Hobbes, Cudworth, Cumberland and others as they attempt to free ethics from supernatural influences, and even to declare that, according to Spinoza, "that which men call God is nature itself misunderstood."<sup>1</sup> It would take us far from our present purpose to consider the justification of this comment. But we see that, even if God is regarded as 'Nature', we must take 'Nature' spiritualised in some sense, for God in Spinoza, has thought as one of His infinite attributes.

#### Section 4

Now, as we have said above, everything follows from God with an absolute necessity. The nature of each object or being is determined by the necessity of the divine nature. And so far as it is so determined by the infinite eternal attribute of God, the essence of each is eternal in itself. The concept of attribute needs an explanation. Without going into the various contradictory interpretations of this concept, let us take it as it appears to our common intelligence. As Spinoza says, God is endowed with an infinite number of attributes each of which is eternal and expresses in its way the eternal infinite essence of God. Two of them are known to us, *viz.*, extension and thought. For my part, there are as many attributes of God, as there are ways of approach to Him. When we approach the Divine through our thought, He appears to us as the supreme thinking Being, and while approached through our physical activities, He is the infinite eternal extension *to us*. Each of these gives us a complete account of God, for whatever way we proceed, we reach the same goal in the end. The attributes are the revelations of the essence of God in the world. We do not know Him except through His attributes. Our essence as thinking beings is determined by the attribute of thought, while the essence of our body is a mode of extension. Anyway, we are determined by the infinite substance to

<sup>1</sup> Kropotkin, *Ethics*.



behave in a particular way, which constitutes our nature. We cannot contradict this nature by acting otherwise without ceasing to be what we are. For instance, God has determined the essence of man which makes him a human being. If anybody thinks that he can act in a way which would contradict this essence, he must at the same time conceive himself to be something other than a human being by the act. "A thing which is conditioned to act in a particular manner, has necessarily been thus conditioned by God; and that which has not been conditioned by God, cannot conceive itself to act. . . A thing which has been conditioned by God to act in a particular way, cannot render itself unconditioned."<sup>1</sup>

Now, a thing is what it is by virtue of its essence and the essence is nothing short of the essence of God so far as it is conceived of in this finite and limited sphere of existence.

As it is the essence of God, *i.e.* follows from the divine nature with a perfect necessity, the essence itself (so far as it is not externally affected by anything) is eternal and infinite so long as it behaves in conformity with its own existence. Now, as Spinoza says, in every particular object, as far as its essence is concerned, there is a natural tendency to preserve its own being. As it is stated by Spinoza: "Everything in so far as it is in itself, endeavours to persist in its own being."<sup>2</sup> And "The endeavour wherewith everything endeavours to persist in its own being, is nothing but the actual essence of the thing in question."<sup>3</sup> We cannot fail to see that by the essence one wants to preserve and by the endeavour for this preservation Spinoza means the same thing. For he makes no distinction between the essence and the power of an object, and whatever one has the power to do, one has also the right to perform.<sup>4</sup>

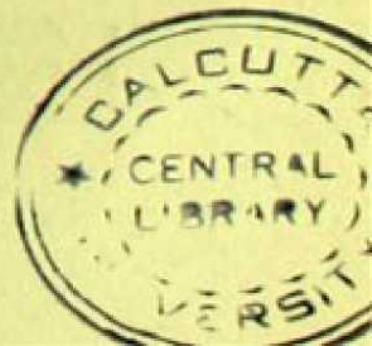
Essence and power are not distinguished even in God. According to Spinoza, God's power is identical with His

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, I, prop. 26 and prop. 27 (Elwes, p. 66).

<sup>2</sup> *Ethics*, 3, prop. 6 (Elwes, p. 136).

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, prop. 7 (Elwes, p. 136).

<sup>4</sup> *A Theologico-Political Treatise*, ch. 16.





essence. He says: "From the sole necessity of the essence of God it follows that God is the cause of himself and of all things. Wherefore the power of God, by which he and all things are and act, is identical with his essence."<sup>1</sup>

Nor are they distinguished in the finite objects and beings that follow from God. For God has given them their respective natures, *i.e.*, their essence, which are determined by the perfection of the divine nature. But if an object needs an additional power to move itself or to preserve its own essence, that would be invariably a power external to the thing itself and would contradict the eternity of the essence by making it affected by the force of that external power.

Spinoza identifies power with virtue. That is, according to him, we are virtuous in proportion to our ability to manifest our essence. Virtue is, in fact, nothing but the essence of the thing in its power to manifest itself. However, we need not enlarge upon this point any more at present; we leave it to be considered later.

To resume the point under discussion, the tendency to preserve oneself is natural to every thing and being. But this principle has been recognised by several thinkers to be the principal law of nature long before Spinoza conceived of it. The Stoics took it to be the first impulse of an animal. And Augustine and Thomas Aquinas found in everything a natural desire for self-conservation. Augustine described this urge as 'love', while Thomas Aquinas termed it 'natural love'. Spinoza in his *Short Treatise on God, Man and Human Well-being* adopts the latter phrase and uses 'natural love' instead of 'conatus' for self-preservation. Of course in advance of the Stoics Spinoza admits that this 'conatus' is present in the animate and the inanimate alike and in this he is in agreement with Augustine and Thomas Aquinas. In fact, Spinoza accepts the doctrine both in its positive and in its negative form. The positive form we have already stated. In its negative

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, I, prop. 34. Proof. (Elwes, p. 74).

<sup>2</sup> *Short Treatise*, App. 2, p. 6.



formulation the principle stands thus: "No one, therefore, neglects seeking his own good, or preserving his own being, unless he be overcome by causes external and foreign to his nature". "No one" Spinoza continues, "from the necessity of his own nature, or otherwise than under compulsion from external causes, shrinks from food or kills himself."<sup>1</sup> The principle in its negative form seems to be directly influenced by Descartes's first law of nature or Newton's first law of motion, for which a body in motion does not stop of itself unless obstructed by some external force. Indeed Spinoza himself reproduces this law in the second part of his *Ethics*.<sup>2</sup> In this context he explains the 'conatus' of the body for its preservation. Body is determined by the infinite modes of the attribute of extension. Now the infinite modes of extension are motion and rest, and so far as the body itself is concerned it seeks for these modes. Similarly, also the 'conatus' of the mind is for the preservation of its essence consisting of the modes of thought. Mind, as Spinoza thinks, seeks to preserve its own essence in so far as it is composed of clear and confused ideas.<sup>3</sup> But a human being has both body and mind. The idea which constitutes the essence of human mind is of the body attached to it, *i.e.*, as he says, the body is the object of the idea. To put it in the words of Spinoza: "The object of the idea constituting the human mind is the body, in other words, a certain mode of extension which actually exists, and nothing else."<sup>4</sup> "That is, if the object of the idea constituting the human mind be a body, nothing can take place in the body without being perceived by the mind."<sup>5</sup> We shall soon discuss the relation between body and mind. Now we set ourselves to consider the various forms of 'conatus' as mentioned by Spinoza.

The endeavour for self-preservation, *i.e.* 'conatus' we have seen, is common to extended things and thinking beings

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, 4, prop. 20, Note (Elwes, p. 203).

<sup>2</sup> *Ethics*, 2, prop. 13 (Elwes, Lemma 3, corollary, p. 303).

<sup>3</sup> *Ethics*, 3, prop. 9 (Elwes, p. 137).

<sup>4</sup> *Ethics*, 2, prop. 13 (Elwes, p. 92).

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.*, prop. 12 (Elwes, p. 91).



alike. Now, 'conatus', when referred to mind alone, is called *will*, while it is called *appetite* when referred to body and mind in conjunction. Desire is appetite with consciousness thereof, and it is obviously the essence of man, in so far as his nature consists of both body and mind.<sup>1</sup>

But it seems to one that there is hardly any scope for the use of these two terms, 'Appetite' and 'Desire'. Of course, in the latter part of the book Spinoza admits no real distinction between the two concepts, for he thinks that appetite virtually remains the same thing, no matter whether there is consciousness of it or not. But I think it is impossible to conceive of appetite as being unconscious. For appetite is referred to both body and mind, and as Spinoza says, there cannot be a mind without consciousness. But if consciousness is already present in appetite, there is no need for an additional term to define the element of consciousness in it.

However, a man always desires to preserve his self. Or, we may put it like this: To say that a man *desires* is to say that he desires to preserve his own self, for desire itself is the 'conatus' for self-preservation. As a man's fundamental motive is to preserve himself, Spinoza defines 'good' as that which a man *knows* to be a means of approaching the ideal type of human nature, which he thinks to be the perfect manifestation of his own essence. As Spinoza puts it: "By *good* I mean that which we certainly know to be useful to us."<sup>2</sup>

"By *evil* I mean that which we certainly know to be a hindrance to us in the attainment of any good."<sup>3</sup> And nothing is useful to us unless it satisfies our 'conatus' in some way or other.

A quotation from Spinoza may render the position clear. "It is thus plain from what has been said", he says, "that in no cases do we strive for, wish for, long for or desire anything, because we deem it to be good, but on the other hand we deem a thing to be good, because we strive for it,

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, 3, prop. 9 (Note, Elwes, p. 137).

<sup>2</sup> *Ethics*, 4, Definition, I (Elwes, p. 190).

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, Definition 2.





wish for it, long for it, or desire it."<sup>1</sup> Something is *good*, because it is desired, *i.e.* is useful for our self-preservation, and not vice versa.

### Section 5

But before we proceed further with the concept of *good*, we must have a brief consideration of Spinoza's theory of emotion. And in order to do that we should discuss the relation between body and mind as he conceives it. According to Spinoza: "Substance thinking and substance extended are one and the same substance, comprehended now through one attribute, now through the other. So, also, a mode of extension and the idea of the mode are one and the same thing though expressed in two ways."<sup>2</sup> By "idea of that mode" is meant the mode of thought. For, as Spinoza says, the most immediate mode of the attribute of thought contains subjectively (*i.e.* in his term 'objective') the objective ('formal' as he says) essence of all things.<sup>3</sup> So he affirms that the order and connection of the ideas is the same as the order and connection of things. And the object of that idea, which constitutes the human mind is the human body as we have seen and this body is no other than the body of his own.<sup>4</sup> The idea is the idea of the object and therefore, changes and perishes with the change or annihilation of the same.<sup>5</sup> Of course, Spinoza admits that "The human mind cannot be absolutely destroyed with the body, but there remains of it something which is eternal".<sup>6</sup> Here obviously he refers to the concept of God which implies the eternal existence of the mind. He conceives mind here under the form of eternity or in its metaphysical existence. But so far as the empirical activity of human nature is concerned, he would even assert so much that "The mind does not know

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, 3. prop. 9, Note (Elwes, p. 137).

<sup>2</sup> *Ethics*, 2. prop. 7, Note (Elwes, p. 86).

<sup>3</sup> *Short Treatise*, 11, 3.

<sup>4</sup> *Ethics*, 2. prop. 13 (Elwes, p. 92).

<sup>5</sup> *Short Treatise*, App. 11, 7.

<sup>6</sup> *Ethics*, 5. prop. 23 (Elwes, p. 259).



itself, except in so far as it perceives the ideas of the modifications of the body".<sup>1</sup>

The position adopted here seems to be at variance with Spinoza's own theory of parallelism between mind and body. It is familiar to us that, according to Spinoza, body and mind are so arranged by the necessity of the divine nature that they perfectly correspond to each other without involving any actual interaction. Extension and thought are two of the eternal attributes of God, each revealing His infinite essence in its own way. Each of them is therefore, eternal and infinite in itself, while no one affects or is affected by the other. As he says: "Body cannot determine mind to think, neither can mind determine body to motion or rest, or any state different from these, if there be."<sup>2</sup> But how do the two positions agree? How can mind remain unaffected by the object (here the body) which constitutes it and except through the modification of which it cannot even know itself? This difficulty will arise again in connection with his theory of emotions. So I now intend to consider it.

In order to apprehend the definition of emotions we must first of all understand the meaning of a few terms as they are used by Spinoza.

To state them in the language of Spinoza, first, "By an *adequate* cause, I mean a cause through which its effect can be clearly and distinctly perceived. By an *inadequate* or partial cause, I mean a cause through which, by itself, its effect cannot be understood."<sup>3</sup>

Now to look into his definitions of 'activity' and 'passivity': "I say that we *act* when anything takes place either within or externally to us, whereof we are the adequate cause; that is (by the foregoing definition) when through our nature something takes place within or externally to us, which can through our nature alone be clearly and distinctly understood. On the other hand, I say that we are passive as regards something when that something takes place within

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, 2, prop. 23 (Elwes, p. 103).

<sup>2</sup> *Ethics*, 3, prop. 2 (Elwes, p. 131).

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, Definition I (Elwes, p. 129).



us, or follows from our nature externally, we being only the partial cause".<sup>1</sup>

In these statements we find an explicit definition of emotion. By emotion is meant "the modification of the body, whereby, the active power of the said body is increased or diminished, aided or constrained, and also the ideas of such modifications".<sup>2</sup> An emotion is active when the power of the body is increased, while otherwise it is passive. Spinoza recognises three *primary* emotions, *viz.* pleasure, pain and desire. The last of these is already known to us and now we will attend to the rest. We must have understood that a modification of which the body is the adequate cause, increases its power of activity, *i.e.* its essence. Now the body being the object of the idea that constitutes the mind, the idea of such modification must increase the mind's power of thought and would affect the mind with pleasure. Whatever, on the other hand, hinders the power of the body, affects the mind painfully. Pleasure is the emotion which is due to an increase in our power of activity, pain being the reverse.

As the essence of man consists in the endeavour to preserve itself, a man always *desires* what is *pleasurable* and refrains from that which appears to be *painful*. The *pleasurable* is the *good*, because it is the *desirable*.

But the concept of good as Spinoza defines it by the terms 'pleasure' and 'desire', so far appears to be only a relative concept. For whatever seems pleasurable to a particular person as contributing to his well-being, as he understands it, is *good for him*, irrespective of any objective consideration. And as Spinoza says that anything may accidentally become the cause of pleasure or pain, what is *good*, at a certain moment, may later turn out to be *evil*. In his *Tractatus De Intellectus Emendatione* Spinoza contends, "The terms good and evil are only applied relatively, so that the same thing may be called both good and bad according to the relations in view, in the same way as it may be called perfect or imperfect. Nothing regarded

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, Definition 2 (Elwes, p. 129).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, Definition 3 (Elwes, p. 130).



in its own nature can be called perfect or imperfect; especially when we are aware that all things which come to pass, come to pass according to the eternal order and fixed laws of nature".<sup>1</sup> Again as he puts it in the *Short Treatise*, "All things in Nature are either things or actions. Now good and evil are neither things nor actions. Therefore good and evil do not exist in Nature".<sup>2</sup> Spinoza denies good and evil to be anything real, for they, as he thinks, have no definition apart from that of the object they qualify.<sup>3</sup> Hence Spinoza is so far found to present us with a concept of relative goodness and so of relative value. The value of a thing, we must say, changes for him from man to man and from moment to moment. It has neither a definite standard nor any status in reality.

Yet it is absurd that a philosopher who devotes his whole self to seeking for the highest value in life should rest content with an idea like this. So I propose to consider his position in greater details before I come to any conclusion.

### Section 6

We have already seen that our virtue consists in the preservation of our own being. There is no virtue prior to this and our virtue lies in the search for our *good*. Now the concept of goodness arises out of the idea of the adequate cause, *i.e.* of activity. As in the case of the body, so also in the case of the mind, the mind is the adequate cause of those ideas which increase its power of activity. Now, the essence of mind, as Spinoza says, is to *understand*, and the mind preserves itself so far as it *understands*. So a man cannot be said to be *virtuous* in so far as he acts from *inadequate* ideas. And for Spinoza, "To act absolutely in obedience to virtue is in us the same thing as to act, to live or to preserve one's being in accordance with the dictates of reason on the

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 4-5 (Wild, edn. 1930).

<sup>2</sup> Ch. 10, p. 83.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*



basis of seeking what is useful to one's self."<sup>1</sup> Therefore, the mind, under the guidance of reason, seeks nothing but to understand, and nothing is either good or evil to a mind unless it helps or hinders this function in any way. According to Spinoza, nothing can affect us as good or evil, *i.e.* can increase or decrease our power of activity if it be something quite different from us. But anything is *evil* by virtue of that part of its nature which being in opposition to our essence, hinders our activity, while it is *good* in so far as it is in harmony with our nature. It is, however, obviously true that there is not a single being in the universe which so much conforms to the nature of man as another human being. And so we may take it to be certain that nothing can be more *useful* to us than human beings as such. But it is also no less evident that as prey to passion we greatly differ from one another. Thus it is stated that "Men can differ in nature in so far as they are assailed by those emotions which are passions, or passive states; and to this extent one and the same man is variable and inconstant".<sup>2</sup> Spinoza, we find, makes a distinction between active emotions and emotions which he calls 'passions' and assumes the possibility of the mind being active in reference to the former.<sup>3</sup> Here we may mention that in the fifth book of his *Ethics* Spinoza speaks of the emotions that arise in connection with reason.<sup>4</sup> By active emotion he means that which increases the activity of our body whereby the mind is led to *understand* more things.

However, we cannot but mark the discrepancy among his several contentions. In the second part of the *Ethics* emotions are said to evolve out of the conjunction of body and mind. They are, in fact, the modifications of the body, *i.e.* the changes which occur in a particular body due to the affections from external bodies. As it is said: "The human mind has no knowledge of the body, and does not

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, 4, prop. 24 (Elwes, p. 204).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, prop. 33 (Elwes, p. 208).

<sup>3</sup> *Ethics*, 5.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, prop. 7 (Elwes, pp. 250-51).



know it to exist, save through the ideas of the modifications, whereby the body is affected ".<sup>1</sup>

But " the idea of each modification of the human body does not involve an adequate knowledge of the human body itself ".<sup>2</sup>

Again, " the ideas of modifications of the human body in so far as they have reference only to the human mind, are not clear and distinct but confused ".<sup>3</sup> And as emotions have been defined as the modifications of the human body, it appears from the given statements that the mind can never know them *adequately*. In other words, it is of necessity passive in reference to every modification of the body, whether it is passive or active. This involves another serious difficulty. The mind, we have seen, does not know itself except through the ideas of the modifications of its own body.<sup>4</sup> But if it is capable of only inadequate ideas of these modifications, how can it expect to know itself adequately?

It should be noted, however, that Spinoza never leaves emotions aside from the life of a human being. He rather seems to explain the moral life of man on the basis of emotions. Even our appreciation of the metaphysical reality, as he conceives it, is not free from the influence of emotion. For it is, as we shall see, nothing short of " the intellectual love of God ". That he finds in emotions the basis of our moral life necessarily follows from his own contentions. Let us see how it occurs.

Human nature, as we know, is composed of both body and mind. Now the body as a mode of extension is made to manifest the physical activities which are none but the several modes of motion and of rest. The mind, on the other hand, is to *understand*. And what can it seek to understand? Obviously the several things and actions of the universe. But as the human mind perceives no external body except through the modifications of its own body,<sup>5</sup> the human mind

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, 2, prop. 19 (Elwes, p. 101).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, prop. 27 (Elwes, p. 105).

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, prop. 28 (Elwes, p. 105).

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, prop. 23 (Elwes, p. 103).

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.*, 2, prop. 26 (Elwes, p. 105).





can only tend to understand those modifications which are none but emotions according to Spinoza. Now the essence of the body is preserved in active emotions, while passions obstruct its power of activity. So the essence of human nature, involving as it does both body and mind, consists in being conscious of the active emotions of its own. It is true that human emotions are always affected with some consciousness and therefore we are not altogether unconscious of our passions. But the consciousness is only half-awakened there and the influence of several external forces take possession of a passive soul.

Hence, it is our virtue to be conscious of our active emotions. For by *virtue* Spinoza understands the power to manifest our essence and this power lies nowhere but in our essence itself. All this we have previously seen. We may also remember, that to act in obedience to virtue is in us the same thing as to act under the guidance of reason,<sup>1</sup> from which it necessarily follows that a man is said to act *reasonably* only when he seeks to understand the active emotions of his own. He is virtuous so long as he is rational, while he is in *impotence* if he is led by external forces to act in a way which does not follow from his own nature. Spinoza does not deny the place of passions in moral life. He would rather go against the philosophers who conceive of the passions as "vices into which men fall by their own fault, and, therefore, generally deride, bewail, or blame them, or execrate them, if they wish to seem unusually pious".<sup>2</sup> Spinoza believes that they are inconvenient, yet necessary elements, having fixed causes, by means of which we endeavour to understand their nature. Reason indeed seeks to restrict or modify \*them, but can never destroy them altogether. It seems that by 'modification' and 'restriction' Spinoza means the transformation of passions into *active* emotions which is nevertheless obviously desirable to man as man.

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, 4, prop. 24 (Elwes, p. 204).

<sup>2</sup> *A Theologico-Political Treatise*, chapter I (Elwes, p. 287).





## Section 7

So we see that the perfection of human nature consists in the *understanding* of the *active* emotions of its own. Now, that which preserves one's power of activity preserves oneself and is therefore one's *good*. But nothing is more useful to a man, we have seen, than a man. That is to say, neither a human body nor a human mind has so much likeness to the body and mind of another being, nothing else follows so adequately from our nature. Therefore, it follows that: "The good which every man, who follows virtue desires for himself he will also desire for other man".<sup>1</sup> Men differ widely from one another so far as they are assailed by passions, while under the guidance of reason or virtue they aspire after the same good and avoid the same evil. Herein lies the clue to the development of Spinoza's social philosophy. In reason he finds the principle of the development of society and the State.

I shall do well to refer to Duff in this connection. Duff seeks to consider the development of the concept of good as the basis of a social ethics in an important section of his work, namely, *Spinoza's Political and Ethical Philosophy*. In fact, Spinoza finds the ground of social life in the concept of good. Duff rightly states that for Spinoza the fact that we are virtuous is enough to make us social. To a man who lives under the guidance of reason another rational being is the most desirable. So far we agree with the explanation given by Duff. But I fail to see why he needs to explain *Fortitude* which is the general name for the distinctive activities of human nature to be a double-sided principle rationally self-seeking on the one hand and longing on the other to be in the service of others. Do we not indeed under the guidance of reason seek the same perfection for ourselves as well as for others? Is it not in search of our individual good that we find it to be one with the good of others? It seems to me that the motive behind the search is always desire to satisfy one's own self. What a man seeks

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, 4, prop. 37 (Elwes, p. 211).



for is his own good, and "man to man is God" because he finds himself to be most perfectly realised only in society. Only thus does he come to see that his virtue conforms to the virtue of others, as they all have the same human nature, so that, "The highest good of those who follow virtue is common to all".<sup>1</sup>

As virtue is power, the power of a man is therefore doubly increased if he works conjointly with another, and so we gain in power by working in association with others. Therefore, it is desirable, as Spinoza thinks, to live in a way so as to form one mind and one body of all men. Hence it follows that, "Whatever conduces to man's social life, or causes men to live together in harmony, is useful, whereas whatever brings discord into a State is bad".<sup>2</sup> Let me now pass on to the concept of social good.

Even at this stage of the development of the concept of good, goodness or value is dependent on human dispositions. But it is no more determined by a passionate or imperfect human nature. It rests on the active nature of man, which finds its own good strengthened by the judgment of others and to be one with their good. Here we find a hierarchy of values, *i.e.* of good, defined as the perfection aspired to by selves. We begin with a concept of value which is individual and relative, and later come to have a social conception of value.

Everything, including a compact, is valid according to its utility. Spinoza tries to show<sup>3</sup> that in a state of nature men must live in a miserable condition, for no one is able to preserve his natural rights in such a state. From this it follows that men should, of necessity, agree to live together so as to enjoy their rights that individuals enjoy only in society and to determine their life no more by any individual force, but by the power of the multitude.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, under the dictate of reason, we need to transfer the natural rights we enjoy as private persons to some authority. The

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, prop. 36 (Elwes, p. 211).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, pr. 40 (Elwes, pp. 216-17).

<sup>3</sup> *A Theologico-Political Treatise*, ch. 5.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, ch. 16 (Elwes, pp. 202-03).





authority in the State is the sovereign being endowed with the natural rights of all. Right for Spinoza is co-extensive with power. That is, a man has right for what he has the power to perform, while power is equal to virtue as we learn. So it comes about that every individual has the natural right to preserve himself as far as he understands. As Spinoza says, the wise man has the sovereign right to do all that reason dictates, or to live according to the laws of reason; so also the ignorant and fools have the sovereign right to do all that desire dictates, or to live according to the laws of desire. This is in conformity with the teaching of Paul, who admits that previous to law, *i.e.* so long as men are regarded as living under the sway of nature, there is no sin.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, the authority which represents all the powers of individuals, has the right to use it in every way so long as it does not go against the individuals themselves.

But the individual has no right to oppose the laws of the sovereign, as he has transferred his own rights to the authority under the dictates of reason. Of course, an individual has every right to oppose the laws of the sovereign if by virtue of his reason he can find that they go in any way against the dictates of reason. As Spinoza puts it : " However unlimited, therefore, the power of a sovereign may be, however implicitly it is trusted as the exponent of law and religion, it can never prevent men from forming judgment according to their intellect." <sup>2</sup>

Yet he attaches so much importance to the right of the authority that he even denies the ideas of a prophet to be of any effect unless they are sanctioned by it. He considers the temporal authorities to represent the rule of God. They are the interpreters of the divine law and the maintainer of public peace. Moreover, a man can best worship God by obeying the rules of charity and justice. The definition of justice in Spinoza conforms to that in Plato. By justice he understands the task of rendering to everyone what is his own *i.e.*, not depriving anybody of his inborn right of self-preservation. This is nothing but a

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, ch. 16 (Elwes, p. 201).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, ch. 20 (Elwes, p. 258).





negative version of the principle of self-preservation, considered from the point of view of beings other than that which seeks to preserve itself. That is, one's individual right to preserve oneself naturally implies an obligation on the part of others to let him enjoy it in peace. But charity and justice are not possible in a state of nature, and so there is the necessity for the State.

Spinoza provides a place for the active emotions like love, honour and desire in the social context of human life. We cannot enter here upon a detailed discussion of each of these emotions. But this much is certain that these emotions help strengthen the bond of union between man and man and form a sound basis for our social concord. We are by now familiar with the emotion of desire. Let us now look into the nature of the emotion of love. This emotion, as Spinoza finds it, has, indeed, a place in the perfect realisation of the highest good or reality. The definition of love follows directly from the emotion of pleasure.

Pleasure, as we know, is an emotion that occurs as we pass from a lesser to a greater perfection in life. 'Love', as defined in the *Ethics*, is "nothing else but *pleasure* accompanied by the idea of an external cause," while, "Hate is nothing else but pain accompanied by the idea of an external cause."<sup>1</sup> And as *good* is what is pleasurable, the object of pleasure, *i.e.* the *good* is also the object of love. To a human being nothing is more useful (*i.e.* good) than another human being, and so, we are asked to love our fellow men, for he who loves tries to keep the object of love present. We love others because we *understand* them to be the cause of our pleasure. We can best preserve ourselves in social life, that is to say, we find a wider scope for *activity* only in a life with others.

One thing, however, strikes us most. It is this, that Spinoza in a certain context makes contradictory statements about the emotion of pleasure. He defines pleasure to be a *passive* state.<sup>2</sup> But then, how does love, arising out of the activities of our nature follow from it? Of course, Spinoza

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, 3, prop. 13, Note (Elwes, p. 140).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, prop. 56, *Proof* (Elwes, p. 168).



in his *Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione* states that the quality of love depends on the beloved object. Fear and disturbance evolve out of love of what is perishable, while love towards the eternal fills the mind with infinite joy. But if the very definition of love follows from the definition of a passive emotion, it is almost impossible to associate it with our higher appreciations.

Moreover, I object to the very definition of pleasure as a passive state of mind. Without entering into a detailed criticism of it, which is not necessary for our purpose, I shall only mention the points of difficulty. Pleasure, as we find in Spinoza, is the resultant emotion of an increase of our power of *activity*. How can it be a passive state by itself? The objection that refers to the definition of love will be considered in connection with the discussion of "the intellectual love of God". Let me now pass on to some other points.

### Section 8

Though mind and body are the *modes* of two of the infinite attributes of God, yet Spinoza seems to consider mind to be superior to body in respect of its capacity for the appreciation of value. It is true that without a body there would have been no idea to constitute mind, because it is only through an *understanding* of the *modification* of the body that the mind is capable of coming in contact with Nature. Nor can the mind realise itself with its power of understanding alone unless understanding exercises itself through these modifications of the body. Yet we see that mind uses body as a means to the appreciation of the true order of the universe, so as to achieve the highest value of its own. So far we have found two kinds of value—the one is utterly relative and individual, while the other is social by its nature. Both these levels, however, concern the preservation of human nature consisting of body and mind together. But as we proceed, we find that Spinoza gradually transcends the level of our interest in body, and after the body has been adequately preserved, he concentrates on mind. The 'conatus' of the mind seeks for something higher than the preservation of the



body, and is led towards the eternal itself. In other words, it tends towards the "intellectual love of God" through intuitive knowledge.

The matter we are to discuss here will not be intelligible, however, with reference to the question of gradation of knowledge. According to Spinoza, there are three grades of knowledge. The first is imaginative knowledge or mere sense-perception, the second is inferential knowledge, and the third the immediate knowledge of the essence of a thing through its proximate cause. The second kind of knowledge is rational, but has ultimately a reference to sense-perception. It is the inductive process of rationalising the elements of experience. The third form of knowledge is intuitive. The mind in its power of understanding proceeds through imagination and reasoning (the second kind of knowledge, as Martineau calls it) but is not contented unless it reaches the immediate knowledge of its own essence (and also the essence of others) to follow from the essence of God. This kind of knowledge involves no connection with sense-perception. It is formed by mind alone, not by the fortuitous movement of the body<sup>1</sup>.

The progress of knowledge may be described in this way. The 'conatus' of mind in search of its good, gradually determines it to see the virtue of all human beings to be its own virtue. But it is not contented therewith. In its restless quest of truth it develops its reason or understanding and it finds a like nature in every object in the universe. The mind, of course, understands it all through the emotions or the modifications of the body, but once it apprehends its union with the rest of the world, it transcends the temporal order of existence in which only a body lives. The mind then discovers itself in the eternal order of the universe and so in God who is immanent in it. As Spinoza puts it: "The more we understand particular things, the more do we understand God."<sup>2</sup> Again, "He who clearly and distinctly understands himself and his emotions loves God, and so much the more in propor-

<sup>1</sup> *Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione*, 91 (Opera 11, pp. 34, 11, 3-4).

<sup>2</sup> *Ethics*, 5, prop. 24 (Elwes, p. 260).



tion as he more understands himself and his emotions." <sup>1</sup> For, not only is it true that we cannot proceed to understand the nature of reality without knowing our own nature as well as the nature of the particular things around us, but it is also a fact, that we can truly realise ourselves and others only by referring them as well as our own nature ultimately to the nature of God. Our knowledge of anything is perfect when we intuitively find it to be determined by God. That is, as it is said, the highest endeavour of the mind and the highest virtue is to understand things by intuition. It may be stated here that the mind, when it perceives things and also itself in intuition, finds them no more to be temporal, but only as eternal. And this is so because every object and being of the world necessarily follows from the eternal divine nature. Spinoza makes no absolute distinction between objects which are temporal and objects which by themselves are eternal. Everything is eternal as an existent of the eternal order of the universe. Indeed, the entire order of the universe is raised to the level of eternity when in the highest perfection of our understanding we perceive it to follow from the absolute necessity of the nature of God. The truth is there eternally present; we are only required to realise it. In this connection we may mention that Spinoza always asserts the truth of simple ideas. Simple ideas, as he says, can never be false in themselves, falsity being due to our conjoining them with one another in a manner in which they are not in fact related. Thus each idea as also each object contains a positive value in itself, and the function of the understanding is only to reveal it. And our understanding can do this only when we immediately deduce an object from God as its proximate cause. So in intuition the mind enjoys union with God and the rest of the universe.

For Spinoza God is not a separate entity controlling the world from outside. He is immanent in the world-process and feels Himself in every rhythm of our life. The mind in its highest achievement finds the world in God and God everywhere. From this follows the intellectual love of God. We

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, prop. 25 (Elwes, p. 260).



love God, because we know Him to be the immediate cause of the pleasure we enjoy in our highest perfection. We reach our perfection when we understand our own essence to be immediately deduced from the essence of God, *i.e.* to be in union with the divine nature. In this passing over to the realm of perfection mind is accompanied by a pleasure which is here termed 'delight', and this is done possibly to indicate that the mind in its highest manifestation is free from all sensuous association. However, we know God to be the direct cause of our pleasure or delight, and so we are in an "intellectual love" with him.<sup>1</sup> This intellectual love of God evolves out of the intuitive faculty of mind, and is therefore eternal,<sup>2</sup> and is the highest virtue of human mind. While Aristotle finds delight in all kinds of knowledge, *i.e.* in knowledge as such, Spinoza refers it to knowledge by intuition alone. As he says: "Whatever we understand by the third kind of knowledge, we take delight in, and our delight is accompanied by the idea of God as cause".<sup>3</sup> Therefore, the emotion of love in its true sense can be attached only to the third kind of knowledge. Of course, in his *Short Treatise* Spinoza considers the nature of love to vary according to its object, and thus assumes a higher and lower quality of it. But we have so far seen that true love comes only out of the third kind of knowledge, for here only we really know the cause of our pleasure. At the level of knowledge by imagination, we have certainly an appearance of love, but there we only erroneously take something to be the cause of our pleasure, and are not really aware of the truth.

However, Spinoza conceives God as the eternal, infinite order of existence with infinite attributes, from two of which the world follows with absolute necessity. Such an entity is not, of course, affected by any sort of emotion. But God loves himself with an intellectual love not in so far as He is infinite, but in so far as He reveals Himself in the finite human mind.<sup>4</sup> The mind loves itself for it finds it to be the

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, 5, props. 32 and 36, and notes (Elwes, pp. 203 and 265).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, Pr. 34, Cor. (Elwes, p. 264).

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, Pr. 32 (Elwes, p. 263).

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, Pr. 36 (Elwes, pp. 264-65).



cause of its own pleasured, God being immanent in its essence. This blessedness of mind is not the reward of our virtue. It is rather our virtue itself. To control our passion is not to pave the way for the attainment of this level of mind. The subduing of the passions themselves is the state of bliss.<sup>1</sup> The perfection of mind thus consists in a state of it in which our passions are overcome. Nothing can affect us passively in this state, for we understand our nature to be one with the nature of God, *i.e.* to follow in accordance with the divine necessity from which everything follows. The intellectual love of God is liable to no contradiction, nor is it in any way reducible to hate. The mind comes to the highest appreciation of its own nature and perfect happiness in this state.

### Section 9

In order to find the development of the concept of value in Spinoza's philosophy, we must enquire how he treats of freedom of the will. While discussing Plato, we have found that in a true appreciation of a certain value the agent must determine himself, so far as his motive is concerned, to appreciate it. But for Spinoza will is not a free cause. As he says: "In the mind there is no absolute or free will; but the mind is determined to wish this or that by a cause, which has also been determined by another cause, and this last by another cause and so on to infinity".<sup>2</sup> Will, according to Spinoza, is the 'conatus', as referred to mind alone (Voluntas). But 'Will', as he states, "is only a particular mode of thinking, like intellect; therefore no volition can exist, nor be conditioned to act, unless it be conditioned by some cause other than itself, which cause is conditioned by a third cause and so on to infinity".<sup>3</sup> It is necessarily a constrained cause, whether taken to be finite or infinite. Hence it follows that even God does not enjoy freedom of his will. And God, as we have seen, acts in accordance with the laws of His own nature. If Spinoza denies freedom to man

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, prop. 42 (Elwes, p. 270).

<sup>2</sup> *Ethics*, II, prop. 48 (Elwes, p. 119).

<sup>3</sup> *Ethics*, I, prop. 32, Proof (Elwes, p. 70).



in this sense, there is no difficulty so far. That every thing must follow its own nature as it is determined by God, does not go against its freedom. Even the fact that God determines us, not with general ideas, but in the particulars of our actions does not make against it, if only we take it to mean that every particular act of an individual is determined by his nature as it follows from God. So far as God has determined mind to *think*, man would realise by this faculty the value of his own life and its activities in his own way. We can also understand Spinoza when he defines freedom as *blessedness*.<sup>1</sup> We are free only when we can completely control our passions, so that they can in no way affect our actions. For passions, as we know, resist the manifestation of our essence and power and keep us away from realising our union with God. To all this we have our consent.

The difficulty, however, seems to lie elsewhere. Spinoza defines will in a manner that contradicts all popular notions of it. He says, "Will and understanding are one and the same".<sup>2</sup> As he explains in another statement, "By the will to affirm and decide, I mean the faculty, not the desire. I mean, I repeat, the faculty whereby the mind affirms or denies what is true or false, not the desire, wherewith the mind wishes for or turns away from any given thing".<sup>3</sup> Will is thus reduced to the simple faculty of affirmation or negation of the truth or falsity of ideas. But affirmation or negation or volition, as he says, is involved in ideas themselves.<sup>4</sup> And this leads Spinoza to admit even understanding (or will) to be a passive faculty. Of course this sounds queer to a modern man. How can understanding, the very essence of mind, be a passive force? We may, however, try to defend Spinoza by saying that he had no conception of 'unknown ideas'. To have ideas for him is to have them 'understood'. Still, the use of the term 'passive' as qualifying the activity of mind seems rather absurd. For the very activity of the human mind is to

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, 5, Preface and Prop. 36 (note) (Elwes, p. 265).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, Prop. 48 (note), p. 120.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, Prop. 48 (Note), p. 120.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, Prop. 49, p. 121.





understand, while passivity has quite a different meaning for him.

### *Section 10*

Spinoza's conception of evil, however, needs attention before we come to a final consideration of his theory. Spinoza's conception of evil seems to follow from the idea of the absolute necessity with which he thinks the world follows from God. As everything follows from the divine nature, nothing is evil or imperfect in itself. "Knowledge of Evil", he says, "is an inadequate idea".<sup>1</sup> We perceive a thing to be evil, because we cannot see it as it exists in the reality as a whole. It appears to be evil to us only if it fails to serve some particular purpose. Some of the objects we take to be evil inasmuch as they do not seem profitable to the necessities of reason. "Inadequate and confused ideas follow by the same necessity as adequate or clear and distinct ideas".<sup>2</sup> And so, "Falsity consists in the privation of our knowledge".<sup>3</sup> It is because we are conscious of the facts and not of their cause that we consider them to be false. According to Spinoza, simple ideas are never false. That is, ideas considered in themselves are necessarily true, for they are all referred to God. Due to our ignorance of the true nature of objects we unite ideas with one another in a manner in which they do not really co-exist, and out of this endeavour falsity evolves. I shall later return to a detailed discussion of Spinoza's conception of freedom of the will and the problem of evil. Let us now pass on to his concept of value.

### *Section 11*

So far we have briefly considered the different sides of Spinoza's philosophy. The presence of the 'conatus' in human nature, *i.e.* the constant urge for the perfect

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, Prop. 36, p. 109.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, Prop. 35, p. 108.



development of one's own self is what gives to his philosophy a concept of value. The whole being of a self, as he finds it, is directed to the realisation of something it considers to be the most valuable, for the self conceives it to contain the very meaning and essence of his own. In other words, nothing is more valued by one than one's own self, the ideal perfection of which, as one conceives it in the different levels of one's consciousness, presents the different ideas of the *good* or the *useful*. We have seen that for Spinoza three kinds of value are appreciated in human life. It is certain that, whatever be the characteristics of value for Spinoza, he conceives value as an ideal. In other words, he gives us an idealistic conception of value. The good is always something *to be realised*. The instinct for the realisation, of course, lies in the very essence of our nature. This instinct, as we have seen, is present in inanimate as well as animate beings. But in human nature alone it is accompanied with consciousness. There alone is an *appreciation* of the good in which lies the value of human life. And I think without this *appreciation* the concept of value has no meaning whatsoever. Such a view we come across in Spinoza's writings though he does not fully work it out. All things under the sky are perfect in themselves. We may say, if we like, that they have at once 'realised' the perfect value of their beings in themselves. But this is not correct so far as I can see. That a thing is perfect means no more than *it is*, as every thing is perfect in the sense that it is what it is by virtue of a divine necessity. But it does not enjoy its own perfection. If it is contended that value is realised in objects whether they are conscious of it or not, we answer that in such cases the objects lack a sense of value. For, the ultimate significance of the concept of value lies in the relation between the ideal *to be realised* and that which aspires and endeavours for the realisation. The concept does not refer to an object or being, the very existence of which signifies a perfect existence of the object. A stone is what it is and is also what it can be. It has no possibility of any further development so far as its essence is concerned. Certainly it may be polished and shaped in various ways but it can neither increase nor decrease its *stoneness*. Nor has it



anything undeveloped or unmanifested in itself, which it can seek to manifest by its own effort. The 'conatus' for self-preservation in its case cannot be called self-realisation in the true sense. Mind begins at the stage of imagination, aims to realise its nature with a greater perfection and gradually passes over to reason and intuition. Man is endowed with the power of thinking and so of appreciating. Mind realises itself in the world and in God and thereby appreciates the value not only of its own but also of the other things in the universe. But Spinoza must not be taken to propound a subjective theory of value. It is true that the objects of nature offer the material that helps the understanding to work. It is also true that mind tends to the appreciation of things external to itself through an instinct to realise its own essence and to find the 'useful' for its own. But when they truly expose their nature to mind, they are all found to exist with a perfection in the world of God. The only achievement of mind in this process is the realisation of its own essence. It comes to appreciate itself as reason in it gradually unfolds itself through conflicts and contradictions. The realisation is ever before it as the perfection to be attained. Even at the lowest level, when we seek for the mere private good, good presents itself as an ideal. The 'conatus', it is said, 'seeks' to find its own good, which it has not accomplished as yet. So the ideal presents itself in the form of a social good and then as the intellectual love of God. The urge for self-realisation does not end with the satisfaction of one's individual interests of the moment. The motive is throughout individualistic, to be sure. We aim at the social good and also at love of God because we feel ourselves better realised with them. But perfection, whatever the form in which it is conceived, always offers itself as an ideal involving a ceaseless effort of the mind for its realisation. That is to say, Spinoza conceives the ideal of self-realisation as presenting itself as more and more universal.

The progressive determination of the ideal self may be said to represent a hierarchy of values. The endeavour for the appreciation of a value, as we have seen, springs from the 'conatus' for self-realisation. In this consists the essence of a being as also happiness in one's power to preserve



oneself.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, it may be contended that happiness consists in a certain satisfaction of one's own 'conatus' as in moral life we desire nothing but to develop our own power or essence. The different conceptions of good, we know, evolve at the different stages of the progressive realisation of self. In a state of passion and ignorance we hanker after mere momentary pleasures and find our happiness in them. But reason, the essence of the 'conatus' remains dissatisfied and seeks its true satisfaction. It moves man to reach towards what seems to have a resemblance to himself. The self finds its good to be realised only in a social environment, as its nature is found to be in union with other selves. That is, it understands its own good to be that which serves society as a whole. The highest realisation of the self, however, consists in an intellectual contemplation of the eternal order of the universe. The 'conatus' at this stage is no more concerned with the preservation of the empirical form of our existence consisting of body and mind. It moves on to the appreciation of the universe in its eternity, for the perfection of the soul can be realised only with reference to this. The self at once transcends the relativity of time and finds itself in immediate union with the eternal. No more does mind proceed according to the laws of induction. It rises to an intuitive appreciation, deducing its own nature along with others from the infinite attribute of the Divine. It achieves thereby blessedness, freedom and the highest happiness for itself.<sup>2</sup>

Thus to the three kinds of self-realisation, as Spinoza conceives them, we may refer three kinds of happiness. The conception of happiness varies according to the conception of the self taken at each of the levels. The satisfaction desired by a self absorbed in passion is not sufficient to content the self which finds its own good to be one with the good of society. And so also, the happiness of a social individual cannot meet the demands of one who seeks the eternal.

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, 5, Prop. 18 (Note) (Elwes, p. 201).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, Prop. 36 (Note) (Elwes, p. 265).





## Section 12

But the concept of value, as we have seen, necessitates freedom of the will on the part of the agent, so that the credit for the appreciation of the ideal can be conferred upon him. As Spinoza asserts: "Love or hatred towards a thing, which we conceive to be free, must, other conditions being similar, be greater than if it were felt towards a thing acting by necessity."<sup>1</sup> But he denies to man freedom of the will even in the least. Certainly he considers that we are free when guided by reason. But we know that for Spinoza to act in conformity with reason is the same as to act in accordance with one's own nature. And then to our utter disappointment we find that human mind, as he conceives it, is endowed with a faculty of willing in no other sense than in the sense of merely affirming or denying the truth or falsity of an idea, which again are involved in the idea itself. But then how does mind determine itself to take the step from inadequate to adequate ideas? Spinoza suggests that the progressive contemplation of adequate ideas is to come through the development of active emotions. But he does not explain how a passive mind comes to know its ideas, which are inadequate ideas, to be futile and feels the need for a higher realisation. Of course, Spinoza himself is led to such contemplation through the experience of the sufferings and the futility of sensuous pleasures. But the consciousness of the futility of inadequate ideas is itself a level of thought which is not easily available for most of us. Or let us enquire, how are we to attain this dissatisfaction at all? How does reason prevail in us? Reason, we have been told, is our very essence. But how and why is it dissatisfied with the lower level of life at a certain moment? Why do some men promise their most to seek a better life while others remain merged in the pleasures of the senses? Duff<sup>2</sup> says that Spinoza conceives man to be determined to think. By the use and misuse of this power they become good and bad. Of course no one

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, 3. Prop. 49 (Elwes, pp. 161-62).

<sup>2</sup> Duff, *Spinoza's Political and Ethical Philosophy*.





knowingly seeks the bad. So, in order to get the man to seek the better we must make him understand it to be of greater profit to him. This position may be ascribed to Spinoza. But I am afraid the recognition of scope of freedom of the will in the *Ethics* would contradict Spinoza's theory of determinism. A more plausible interpretation, I think, is given by Wolfson. Wolfson finds that for Spinoza reason is a blind tool of nature. When we come to possess it, it becomes a second nature to us and our actions follow from it automatically. This exposition seems plausible because for Spinoza every one, of necessity, seeks for what he understands to be his own good, and so we seek our good according to reason if reason takes hold of our nature. But how does reason evolve? Wolfson suggests: "At the challenge of emotion reason springs into action in the same manner as our eyelids close at the sudden approach of danger to our eyes."<sup>1</sup>

This function of reason, I think, can be explained better by taking into account the self-contradiction involved in the conflict of emotions. As self-contradiction mars the manifestation of the understanding, the mind is automatically (not by will) led to seek for a remedy and calls for the aid of reason. But this would, at the same time, assume for the mind a faculty which is something more than the mere capacity for affirmation or denial.

However, this interpretation of Spinoza attributes a new meaning to the three stages of our self-realisation. At first, the life of every individual begins in the state of passions and confusions. The mind at this stage wants to satisfy its lower dispositions alone. But reason is always there in us, though yet implicit. Several sensuous desires come in clash with one another, and at the moment of the conflict reason springs up by virtue of the implicit necessity for the solution of the contradiction and makes us act in accordance with its laws. But if the process is natural and is not directed by any individual decision, why does not everybody behave in the same way? We may defend Spinoza by saying that emotions vary according to the constitution of the body and so do not equally affect the mind of all. Even when placed

<sup>1</sup> Wolfson, Vol. 2, p. 232, edition 1934.



under the same circumstances, all are not equally affected. Thus, out of the same experiences, reason evolves in one, while it does not in another. We may also explain in this way why some men are rational and others are not. With the gradual development of reason the self passes on to higher and higher realisation of its own ideal, the description of which we have already given.

So, emotions play a significant role in the development of our reason. Not only is it that the 'intellectual love of God' has an emotional origin, but we have to depend on the conflict of our emotions till the final stage of our progress. In this highest revelation, of course, reason is not worried about the preservation of emotions, though it works on the basis of them. Of course, it is the 'conatus' of the mind alone which is finally satisfied in our 'intellectual love of God' for the purpose of which emotions are used as means. Yet they somehow preserve themselves in the moral life of a man.

However, according to the interpretation of Spinoza's theory we have just considered, his system of philosophy appears to be a mechanical one. The truth evolves out of the very constitution of our nature but in a mechanical way. The mind is not to *will* the ideal, nor can it endeavour for it in any way but to affirm or deny it to be true or false. These again are rendered mechanical because the affirmations or denials are involved in the ideas themselves. And this idea is further advanced by Spinoza's own statement that understanding, the essence of mind, is a passive faculty.<sup>1</sup> But then how do we conceive mind to *realise* the value in the true sense of the term? I am afraid the concept of value can hardly find here a ground unless it is conceived to be mechanical in its nature. Freedom of the will is necessary, as we find, in the appreciation of any value. How can a passive faculty of mere affirmation and denial make us *realise* a value? It may be suggested, however, that the ideal is still determined by the agent in the sense that it is only a perfection of his own nature and so also the endeavour to realise it arises out of the very constitu-

<sup>1</sup> Short Treatise, 11. 16. 5.



tion of his nature. We may also find that consciousness which is the characteristic of human nature is present throughout the entire process of its self-manifestation, and so it is no error to see the mind to 'appreciate' the value or the good. But the definition of the 'understanding' as passive upsets the whole position. For the 'understanding' is the essence of mind. And if we are 'passive' through all the stages of our self-realisation, consciousness does not help us by its presence. For a passive consciousness of some occurrence is not the same as the *realisation* of a value.

The dissertation will be incomplete, however, without a mention of the problem of evil. The knowledge of evil, as Spinoza conceives it, is an inadequate idea, and inadequate ideas are due to the privation of our knowledge.<sup>1</sup> The bad or the inadequate is said to follow from the divine nature with as much necessity as that with which follow the actions which are good. Moreover, the distinction between the good and the bad, as Duff<sup>2</sup> explains, is merely extrinsic in their nature. They are produced out of the human nature in the context of moral life and are therefore artificial. Of course, Duff admits that they are real so far as God has destined man to be moral. But God has given him also the power to think, by the free use of which he may turn good or bad. Indeed, every one seeks for the good and nobody wants to have the bad according with his knowledge. The attempt to make one do the better, as we have said, must be preceded by an endeavour to make him *know* the better. As Duff puts it: "If you want to have a different effect, you must alter the condition. But the man's conduct you cannot alter unless you lead him to judge differently. And you cannot lead him to a different judgment, unless you influence him by some *utilitas* or advantage which he (and not you) can appreciate and desires as better."<sup>3</sup>

Now the evil seems to be done out of a false judgment. But what is the status of the action? Has it any place in reality? Spinoza thinks that the knowledge of evil is an

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Spinoza's Political and Ethical Philosophy*, Edn. 1903.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 188.



inadequate idea. It is, of course, hard to realise how the knowledge of the evil can be an inadequate idea. When we know the evil as evil our idea is no longer inadequate. But Spinoza thinks otherwise. Nothing is really evil for him, and so if we know something to be evil it only amounts to this that we do not know it truly. According to Spinoza, we are passive in so far as we are affected externally<sup>1</sup> and suffer from our passions alone. It sometimes happens that in our ignorance, we fail to see what is really adequate to us and assume the adequate to be inadequate. But there is a vast universe beside us. As he says, "It is impossible that man should not be a part of nature, or that he should be capable of undergoing no changes, save such as can be understood through his nature only as their adequate cause."<sup>2</sup> "We are passive in so far as we are part of Nature, which cannot be conceived by itself without other parts."<sup>3</sup> But we have also found that nothing is foreign to a mind unless the mind fails to *understand* it. And so the suggested remedy is to *understand* all things with clearness and distinctness. As Spinoza states towards the end of the fourth book of his *Ethics*, "But human power is extremely limited, and is infinitely surpassed by the power of external causes; we have not, therefore, an absolute power of shaping to our use those things which are without us. Nevertheless, we shall bear with an equal mind all that happens to us in contradiction to the claims of our own advantage, so long as we are conscious that we have done our duty, and the power which we possess is not sufficient to enable us to protect ourselves completely, remembering that we are a part of universal nature, and that we follow her order. If we have a clear and distinct understanding of this, that part of our nature which is defined by intelligence, in other words, the better part of ourselves, will assuredly acquiesce in what befalls us and in such acquiescence will endeavour to persist. For, in so far as we are intelligent beings, we cannot desire anything save that which is necessary, nor yield absolute acquiescence

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, 3, definitions.

<sup>2</sup> *Ethics*, 4, Prop. 4, p. 193.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, Prop. 2, p. 192.





to anything save to that which is true: wherefore in so far as we have a right understanding of these things, the endeavour of the better part of ourselves is in harmony with the order of nature as a whole."<sup>1</sup>

Our mind transcends its passivity as soon as it understands the element of necessity inherent in them. No longer do we cry for an imaginary freedom of the will, nor for freedom from the bondage of the necessity that binds everything beneath the heavens. In this consists our blessedness and our freedom. We are free from passions because nothing affects us externally any longer. Duff always affords a defence of the theory of evil as it is developed by Spinoza. Indeed the theory itself leaves very little scope for objection. Yet we must mention a point. If Spinoza assumes for mind no other capacity than to affirm or deny, this affirmation or this denial again being involved in the ideas themselves, we cannot see, how, in spite of all the programmes for a better morality, the mind can make adequate even a single idea if the idea presents itself as inadequate. It may be suggested that reason springs up in the conflict of emotions and removes the apparent inadequacy from the idea. But then, we can in no way blame the agent for the evil he does. For, in that case, neither has he willed the evil, nor has he any power to cure it. At the same time we need to be reminded that Spinoza himself does not offer this idea of the mechanical outcome of reason in the course of the conflict of emotions. It is only a suggestion by one of his expositors to supply a missing link to his theory. And if this suggestion be seriously taken to be regarded as an interpretation of Spinoza, it must be said that there is no place for the concept of value in his philosophy.

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, 4, App. 32, p. 243.





## CHAPTER III

### THE CONCEPT OF VALUE IN KANT'S PHILOSOPHY

#### *Section 1*

##### *Formulation of the problem*

The modern treatment of the problem of value is inspired by Kant. So, he has often been regarded as the father of modern philosophy of value, though, he is better known as the author of critical philosophy. But this I state here only as an introductory remark. As in a systematic discussion, we must start from the very beginning, our first enquiry will be whether in Kant's philosophy, we can really find a treatment of the problem of value at all, and if we can, we shall have to see how he treats it. What spheres of our life involve a proper value-appreciation? Is this question raised in every sphere of our life? Or, does it arise only in certain particular context, while other spheres remain irrelevant to it? Here we have to determine therefore whether in Kant's philosophy we can find a clear answer to the questions. In other words, how does Kant define value? Is value for him something objective, or is it subjective in its nature? If he offers a definition, we have to see if that covers his whole treatment of value. We shall have to consider also the conception of different degrees of value and whether his theory states that there are different kinds of value.

#### *Section 2*

##### *Some fundamental questions concerning Kant's Treatment*

According to Plato, three spheres of our life involve the question of value. These are the spheres of knowledge, morality and aesthetic appreciation. The values attaching to them are truth, goodness and beauty. Besides, we often speak of economic and other instrumental values. Now as I have mentioned in connection with my discussion about Plato,



anything which is known to possess one or other kind of value, is called good.<sup>1</sup> The word 'good', so far as the common use of it is concerned, is a synonym of the word 'valuable' and so, we think that we are faced with the problem of value whenever we find the treatment of the problem of *good*. Certainly Kant devotes an important section of his works to the treatment of the problem of *good*. But in his treatment of *good*, Kant is mainly concerned with moral value. We, however, cannot accept this position without determining whether the conception of value extends for him beyond the sphere of morality.

Let us consider the question of knowledge. Does it offer a sufficient scope for the appreciation of value? Value, in the ordinary sense, involves the conception of an ideal and implies efforts for its realisation. As we understand it in our common sense, value means significance. Anything that acquires a significance becomes valuable. But how does it obtain this significance? One would answer by saying that a thing acquires significance by approximating to some ideal. Whatever value a thing (act or any thing) possesses proceeds from the ideal in question and according to the degree of its success in realising the ideal. The ideal of will or action, must itself be determined by the agent himself and the effort for its realisation should be voluntary. The ideal perfection of an object also must be determined by the nature of the object and in this connection we may refer to the Platonic conception that every kind has a sort of perfection of its own, and to Spinoza's idea of the 'conatus', which he conceives to exist in all things of nature and of mind. But the question remains, whether in the case of physical object the conception of value does actually arise, as the realisation of the perfection by a process of autonomous efforts is not possible for this object. However, an ideal, which is determined mechanically and is itself dependent on extraneous conditions, cannot be truly an ideal. For, in that case, the true ideal will be the conditions that determine the ideal which is mechanically

<sup>1</sup> Plato's use of the term 'good' should not confuse us. For, in the end, he includes all values in the Idea of the Good, which is the ultimate reality and at the same time the highest value.



determined, as the true source of significance will be the conditions and not this determined ideal. And so also the efforts for the realisation of the ideal must be autonomous. When we find ourselves compelled to work in a particular way by conditions external to ourselves, we remain outside the sphere of value.

Knowledge, according to Kant, as we all know, is a mechanical and artificial product. For materials of knowledge, we are completely dependent on what is *given* through our senses, on the basis of the *a priori* forms of intuition, space and time. And knowledge is produced, when the sense-impressions are shaped with the help of the categories of the *understanding*. The correct application of the *forms* and *categories* to the *intuitions* makes knowledge valid. It may be inferred from this that this validity is an ideal, and our attempt to unite the *intuitions* correctly under these *forms* and *categories* is the effort towards its realisation. But what prevents us from taking them in this way is the mechanical nature of knowledge as such. In the knowledge-situation the materials of knowledge as well as the *forms of intuition* and the *categories of the understanding* are *given* in such a way that we cannot receive the sense-intuitions except through the *forms*. The correct analogy is that of "the Blue Spectacles", which are fitted on our eyes in such a way that we cannot remove them and so are obliged to see everything through them. Of course, we are active to some extent so far as the faculty of the *understanding* is concerned, as we actively categorise the intuitions given in space and time. Yet it does not help us in any way, for we are compelled to use them for the realisation of knowledge which is itself determined. We are, so far as our knowledge is concerned, restricted to the world of appearance, which, as Kant says, is determined by the world of noumena. We are completely incapable of transcending the phenomenal world in our knowledge. Therefore, the ideal of knowledge is not an absolute ideal, and the effort for its realisation, though partly involving activity on our part, is in no way an autonomous effort. Again, though we are active in using the categories, yet they are also imposed upon us by what we do not know. Thus we find that, properly speaking, our knowledge does





not involve the question of value. Knowledge may be *valid* due to our correct application of the *categories* to the *intuitions*, but not *valuable* in the true sense of the term. It may, at best, involve a mechanical or technical value as a particular skill is considered valuable for a particular purpose, *e.g.*, the art of navigation is good for shipping. Kant, as we will see afterwards, admits this type of technical good. But this kind of value should more properly be called *utility*. And possibly for this reason, Kant abstains from using the word 'good' in case of knowledge, and so far as knowledge is concerned, he seems not to be at variance with common sense, for value in the true sense is not appreciated in knowledge, as he defines it.

Kant's moral philosophy is, of course, an elaborate treatment of the problem of *good*. Besides, although Kant takes the word 'good' to mean moral value, he uses the word in connection with some instrumental values also, and his treatment of *good* is all important even though it does not exhaust the nature of value as such.

Trouble, however, arises in connection with Kant's treatment of beauty. For in his analysis beauty becomes all subjective. If we here bring in the concept of value, it cannot be taken here in the same way, as it is taken in common value-judgments. So, we shall have to consider this section of his philosophy most carefully.

The question of knowledge we have already considered. We shall next take up the Kantian treatment of *good* and then the question of aesthetic judgment. Last of all, we shall consider them together in order to see what estimate we can finally make of them.

### Section 3

#### *The Problem of Good*

Now let me begin with the problem of *good*. In order to deal with the problem, we have to enter into the very heart of Kant's moral philosophy, though we regard the treatment of *good* not as a discussion of moral value as such, but as an analysis of the concept of goodness.



As we proceed to discuss the Kantian treatment of *good*, the first thing we have to look for is the definition of the word 'good'. The term is defined more than once in his works.

As he puts it :

"That is good, which by means of reason, commends itself by its mere concept."<sup>1</sup>

"For the good is the object of will, that is of a rationally determined faculty of desire."<sup>2</sup>

Good has also been defined as the necessary object of the power of appetition and bad as that of aversion.<sup>3</sup> Here one thing is clear and it is that whatever may be its nature, *good* for Kant is by all means an object of practical reason (*i.e.*, will). This is expressly stated in one of the above definitions and by 'power of appetition', Kant means nothing but will. In his *Critique of Judgment* Kant clearly says, "In both cases (good in itself and good as means) the concept of an end is implied and consequently the relation of a reason (at least possibly) to willing . . .".<sup>4</sup>

In *The Analytic of Pure Practical Reason*,<sup>5</sup> he frankly admits again that "Good or Evil always implies a reference to will, as determined by the law of reason". Good has also been defined as that "which determines the will by means of the conceptions of reason, and consequently not from subjective causes, but objectively, *i.e.*, on principles which are valid for every rational being as such".<sup>6</sup>

It is evident from the above definition that *good* is an object of practical reason or will, according to some objective principle of reason. The use of the term 'Conception' in the definitions makes this point clear. It signifies a definite concept of goodness and whatever conforms to this concept is *good*. In *The Analytic of Pure Practical*

<sup>1</sup> *Critique of Judgment* p. 46. (Meredith Ed. 1911).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 48.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 46.

<sup>5</sup> P. 180 (Abbot's Transl., 6th Ed. 7 p. 151).

<sup>6</sup> *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*, p. 37 (Abb., 6th Ed., p. 30).



*Reason*, Kant defines *good* as something which is necessarily desired according to a principle of reason.<sup>1</sup> That this principle is an objective one is evident from the fact that *good* has been defined in the *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*,<sup>2</sup> as determining will on grounds valid for all, and in *The Analytic of Pure Practical Reason*,<sup>3</sup> as being always judged by reason, and so, "by concept which we can communicate to every one". Thus *good* is something which is necessarily desired according to an *objective* principle of reason. The use of the word 'Desire' may confuse us. But Kant, though he sometimes seems to mean by desire 'Lower Desires' alone (*i.e.* sensuous desires which have as their objects the ideas of pleasant and unpleasant)<sup>4</sup>, does not generally distinguish between desire and practical reason, the necessary object of which is *good*.

In a more technical language *good* may be defined after the manner of Paton as the necessary object of a rational will, according to an objective principle of practical reason.<sup>5</sup> What we have to see is whether Kant's whole treatment of *good* is inspired by this definition given above. It is true that this seems to be a definition of moral goodness. And the portion of *The Analytic of Pure Practical Reason* from which we have so far quoted, associates good and evil only with a moral possibility<sup>6</sup>. But Kant uses the word 'good' also with reference to actions, which are *good as means*, which do not seem to be included in a moral category. And as he does not offer any other definition of the term, we must see whether by this definition, he adequately explains all kinds of *good*.

<sup>1</sup> *The Analytic of Pure Practical Reason*, p. 178 (Abb., p. 148).

<sup>2</sup> *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*, p. 37 (Abb., p. 30).

<sup>3</sup> *The Analytic of Pure Practical Reason*, p. 178 (Abb., p. 149).

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 134 (Abb., pp. 111-12).

<sup>5</sup> *Categorical Imperative*, Ch. The Good.

<sup>6</sup> *The Analytic of Pure Practical Reason*, p. 177 (Abb., p. 148).





## Section 4

*Definite meaning of the terms of the Definition*

Kant offers a definition of *good*, but so far we have not discussed it. Kant defines *good* as the necessary object of a rational will according to some objective principle of reason.<sup>1</sup> In order to grasp its significance, we must make clear to ourselves the definite meaning of some of the terms of this definition.

First, we take up the phrase 'Practical Reason'. We do so because when the phrase is explained, it will help to explain the other terms in the definition. "Every thing in nature works according to laws. Rational beings alone have the faculty of acting according to the conception of laws, i.e. according to principles, i.e., have a *will*. Since the deduction of actions from principles requires *reason*, the will is nothing but practical reason."<sup>2</sup> Practical reason is therefore synonymous with the word 'will,' and what is meant by will is the power of acting according to principles. Nothing except a rational agent in the world can have a will. Animals and also men, in that aspect of their nature in which they are similar to animals, are always determined by laws, external and internal. Even if human beings become partly aware of such determination, they cannot actively determine its process. A human being is more or less conscious of the natural processes like respiration, for instance. Yet the process of respiration never depends on his understanding it. It is only as a rational being that a man works by realising the significance of the law and himself decides to follow it. He is not simply determined by the law, but he *obeys* the law. The laws are not externally imposed upon him as a law of nature. They are rather the *principles* of his actions. As this is possible only through his capacity of reason; the laws with reference to which man has a *will* are not laws of nature, but of reason. Will or the faculty

<sup>1</sup> *Categorical Imperative*, Ch. The Good (Paton).

<sup>2</sup> *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*, p. 36 (Abb., p. 29).



of acting according to a principle therefore has been termed 'practical reason' or 'reason in action'.

Then let us consider the phrase 'Objective Principle'. An objective principle is one on which every rational agent would *necessarily act*, if reason had full control over his action<sup>1</sup>. The marks of objectivity, as every one should agree, are *necessity* and *universality*. And these are emphasised by the terms 'every' and 'necessarily' in the definition. An objective principle therefore is one which holds *universally* and *necessarily*. Kant is here speaking of the objective principle of reason in action. He thereby means a principle which would necessarily hold upon beings, if reason had been the only guiding light of their actions. The principle is a product of the faculty of reason, which is common to all human beings and as such is the absolute and supreme motive force behind their action.

The term 'Rational Will' need not be further explained. It means *will only* when it is considered by virtue of its essential character and is not exposed to any external influence from senses. As will is nothing but reason in action, every will in its own nature must necessarily be rational. And as Kant has defined *good* as a necessary object of will or practical reason, the definition of *good* as Paton interprets it by adding 'Rational' to 'Will' seems to convey to us no additional information about will, but only emphasises the exclusion of sensuous elements from the nature of the will. The *good* is the *necessary* object of will. What thing or action can be the *necessary* object of practical reason, we shall see later. But it must be something which reason (reason in action) aims to attain by virtue of its own nature without being determined by anything external to itself. The definition of *good* becomes clearer, as the terms involved in it are analysed. To repeat, first, *good* can only be an object of will or reason in action and not of sense. And in the second place, will chooses the object by an objective principle of its own.<sup>2</sup> In other words, the principle must be of such a nature that it is capable of holding on all rationally determined agents. It holds on them not only necessarily, being a

<sup>1</sup> *The Moral Law*, pp. 13-14 (Paton Ed. 1951, p. 20).



principle of reason, which is common to all of them, but universally, that is, irrespective of their peculiarities. When a person *wills* something necessarily by virtue of his reason in its practical use, being determined by a principle of its own, which holds necessarily and universally on all rational agents, the object of such a will is *good*.

Our next task will be to determine what the objective principle of practical reason is and what things or actions are necessarily sought by will itself.

### Section 5

#### *The objective principle or Practical reason, the formulae and the autonomy of Will*

What amongst things can be called *good*? In other words what can satisfy the above definition?

Let us first determine what is the necessary object of practical reason, or as Paton says, of the rational will. "For since reason is not sufficiently serviceable for guiding the will safely as regards its objects and the satisfaction of all our needs (which it in part even multiplies)—a purpose for which an implanted natural instinct would have led us much more surely; and since nonetheless reason has been imparted to us as a practical power, *i.e.* as one which is to have influence on the *will*, its true function must be to produce a *will* which is *good*, not as a means to some further end, but *in itself*"<sup>1</sup>. The necessary object of practical reason is therefore good will. Now, Kant has taken it for granted that in the constitution of the organic nature no organ is destined to any end unless it is also the most appropriate instrument for that purpose. Reason, as Kant says, must be said to be very wrongly chosen if it has been determined for the purpose of seeking our happiness, *i.e.* the satisfaction of all our needs, for which instinct is a far better instrument. Nor is reason by itself capable of satisfying our necessities regarding the objects of the world. Reason can, of course, determine our *will* to produce action for realising objects. But the actual attainment of the things depends on several other external

<sup>1</sup> *Groundwork of Metaphysics of Morals* (Paton, p. 64, Ed. 1951).



conditions, on which reason has no control. Even the external manifestation of the will in action may be vitiated by conditions of mind like self-love. Reason, therefore, has full control only on our will, and its necessary object can be something about willing. As Kant says, "To decide whether something is an object of *pure* practical reason or not, is only to discern the possibility or impossibility of *willing* the action by which if we had the required power (about which experience must decide), a certain object would be realised".<sup>1</sup> Even the will to produce something, or the will, which is willed as a means to some purpose cannot be the necessary object of reason in action. For such a will is determined by something external to itself, *i.e.* the thing it aims to attain. The objects external to will may be its objects, but not necessarily. They are not things willed by virtue of their own nature. Therefore, the necessary object of reason in action can only be a will which is not means to some further end and which is good on its own account. In Kant's own words, "Nothing can possibly be conceived in the world or even out of it which can be called good, without qualification except a Good Will."<sup>2</sup> It is good independent of the results it produces and like a jewel shines by its own glamour, even if due to some misfortune it fails to produce any actual result. Good will is not only good in itself, but is the condition of the goodness of all other things, like intelligence, wit, courage, etc. They cannot be good, if the will behind them is not good. It is also the indispensable condition of our being worthy of happiness. Good will is the highest, but not the complete good. Kant attempts a reconciliation by determining a two-fold function for us; the first is to produce the unconditioned good or good-will and the second, which is to be subordinated to the first, to seek happiness, which means our 'Preservation' and 'Welfare'.

Whether this attempt of Kant has been successful or not, we shall consider later. But what is evident and necessary for our present purpose is that the necessary object of reason in action is good will.

<sup>1</sup> *The Analytic of Pure Practical Reason*, p. 177 (Abb. p. 148).

<sup>2</sup> *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*, p. 1 (Abb. 9).





In his statement of the objective principle of practical reason, Kant manifests his formalism to a degree. In fact, he specifies the principle in no way, but merely states it to be the principle of pure practical reason itself, which is necessary and universal. The universality and necessity are deducible from the fact that good will is autonomous. The principle, to be more precise, is the principle of our own, produced by us by virtue of our reason. The faculty of reason is common to all men. So, a principle produced out of reason itself in action, cannot but have a universal appeal to our rational nature. It is also necessary, *i.e.* obligatory on our part to follow it, for it is a command of our own nature (rational nature). And so far as we obey a law of our own nature, our will is autonomous to that extent.

The principle is a principle of reason itself and has full control over those who are guided by reason alone. These we have seen above. But the being, whose acts, are absolutely determined by reason, is no other than God. His actions follow from this principle automatically. The will of such a being, Kant describes as 'Holy Will'. Man is imperfect by his very nature. Of course, reason is an element in him, by virtue of which he produces the objective principle of reason, but individually considered reason is not the only factor determining his acts. Sensibility lies along with reason in man's nature and influences his action as reason does. How is it then possible for man to be in accordance with the law of reason? Kant suggests an easy solution. According to Kant, a man can act according to the law of reason, if he regards it as his duty to do so. The question of moral goodness is bound up with the question of duty. "A human action is morally good, not because it is done from immediate inclination—still less because it is done from self-interest—but because it is done for the sake of duty".<sup>1</sup> If the pursuance of this law is taken as a duty, vitally obligatory on our part, then only can we understand how, in spite of inclinations and impulses that tend to mislead us, a man determines himself to obey the principle of reason. An action is not morally good, even if in its outward manifestation it appears to be in accordance with the

<sup>1</sup> *Ground Work*, pp. 8-13 (Paton, pp. 18-19).



objective principle of reason. The goodness of an action lies in the motive, which means the spring of an action. It is a subjective principle on which a rational agent does act: "A principle manifested in actions which are in fact performed."<sup>1</sup> It is only when we act solely "for the sake of duty", that we can pronounce the act to be morally good. Duty has also been defined as "The necessity of acting only from the respect for the law". Duty has its sole reference to the motive of our actions. Indeed actions themselves are never sufficient to prove themselves to be moral. Let us quote in this connection a few words from Kant himself. As he puts it, "In fact, it is absolutely impossible to make out by experience with complete certainty a single case in which the maxim of an action, however right in itself, rested simply on moral grounds and on the conception of duty. Sometimes it happens that with the sharpest self-examination we can find nothing beside the moral principle of duty which could have been powerful enough to move us to this or that action and to so great a sacrifice; yet we cannot from this infer with certainty that it was really not some secret impulse of self-love, under the false appearance of duty, that was the actual determining cause of the will. . . . since, when the question is of moral worth, it is not with the actions which we see that we are concerned, but with those inward principles of them which we do not see"<sup>2</sup> It is thus impossible even for the agent himself to judge whether his action is really moral or not, for the true source may remain secret in spite of all sorts of self-examination. Thus an act motivated solely by the respect for the law of reason and not by a particular desire for objects or even a desire for happiness, is done for the sake of duty and therefore morally good. The concept of duty implies an obligation on our part to do something only because it is a command of the law.

The idea of obligation leads us to consider the concept of 'categorical imperative'. As Kant says: "The conception of an objective principle, in so far as it is obligatory for a

<sup>1</sup> *Ground Work*, pp. 13-14 (Paton, p. 20).

<sup>2</sup> *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*, pp. 29-30 (Abb. p. 23).



will, is called a command (of reason), and the formula of the command is called an imperative<sup>1</sup>. An imperative involves the sense of 'ought' and thus expresses the relation of will to an objective law, which implies obligation of the will to obey it. An imperative is hypothetical, if it is for the sake of an external end. An imperative, on the other hand, is categorical when it bids some action to be done for its own sake, *i.e.* when it contains the supreme objective necessity and is stated in the form "do this", instead of being stated as, "do this if you want that", the latter being the form of a hypothetical imperative. Now, a law of reason, which is universal and necessary and which extracts its necessity and universality from its being produced by human reason, is absolutely obligatory on our part. And it commands us only to will (produce reason in action), *i.e.* to act according to reason, not with the purpose of attaining something outside it, but for the sake of the action itself, irrespective of the result it produces. A principle, which commands thus is no more a mere principle. It would be more appropriate to call it a law, and Kant in fact, calls it a *practical law*, as it refers solely to will. It is absolutely binding on all rational agents and calls for their complete obedience. This is also the essential factor in the concept of duty. That it is so is evident from our common-sense notion. When anybody thinks it his duty to save a drowning man, his action is not motivated by the idea of gaining something thereby. To such acts, Kant ascribes the highest moral value. We can see, how this again brings us to the notion of the good will. The imperative of reason (*i.e.* the categorical imperative) cannot command us to do anything regarding the external world, *i.e.* to attain something there. The imperative can be effective only in our will, on which reason has complete control as it is a power of its own. It can, therefore, only ask us to manifest a will. The will which conforms to the categorical imperative is evidently a good will. Of course, Kant has offered five formulae with the help of which we may test whether a particular maxim accords with the objective principle of reason or not. But we should

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 37 (Abb., p. 30).



mention good will once again, the manifestation of which is the ideal of all moral maxims.

The word 'Maxim' needs a little more explanation. A maxim, as we know, is the same thing as a motive or spring of action. It is something which leads one to act. As Kant says, it is a 'subjective principle', on which particular acts are performed by particular persons. A maxim, in the language of Paton, is thus always some sort of general principle, under which we will a particular action<sup>1</sup>. Thus, if I commit suicide in order to avoid unhappiness, I may be said to act on the maxim that whenever life becomes unhappy, one must put an end to it. All such maxims are *material* maxims. The general principle of doing whatever one's duty is has been described by Kant as a *formal* maxim, which is devoid of any particular matter. A material maxim (*i.e.* particular maxim) is acceptable or rejectable according as it conforms to or conflicts with the formal maxim.

Five formulae have been offered for this test. Let us now see some of these formulae.

The first formula is the formula of the universal law. "Act only on that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law".<sup>2</sup> It is only when we act on such a maxim that we may be certain that we follow the categorical imperative, the law of reason. The law of reason, we have seen, is a necessary and universal law. We can therefore accept only a maxim, which can be willed to be universal, *i.e.* we will that others should also follow the same maxim on which we have chosen to act. And only the maxim which has its root in our reason may claim to be universal (those which have their roots in our senses can have no such claim, for they are relative by their very nature). To see how this is practicable, we need a concrete example. Suppose, somebody takes it as his maxim to cheat others by telling lies. Now, though he himself may choose to act on this maxim, he cannot will this to be a maxim of action for others, for, if he wills so, he cannot deceive anybody. Everyone will try to cheat others by telling lies and nobody will be cheated in practice.

<sup>1</sup> *The Moral Law* (Paton, p. 20).

<sup>2</sup> *Ground Work*, p. 52 (Paton, p. 88).



A further specification of the moral maxim is given by the third formula : " Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end."<sup>1</sup> As Paton interprets the formula, and as we see, the part of human nature which we are asked to treat as an end in itself, is the rational part of it. It signifies the same old point that reason in man should always be respected for its own sake and its commands are to be obeyed unconditionally. The phrase 'at the same time' indicates, that humanity is treated sometimes as means too as in the case of several hypothetical commands<sup>2</sup>.

All this has already been discussed. But the more important aspect of this formula is found in the principle of freedom and autonomy, which the maxim pleads for, and which is of crucial importance so far as a moral will is concerned. It points to the fact that a rational agent should not be determined by anything outside himself. If he is asked to obey a command for the sake of attaining something outside the command, he will, by the very act be determined by objects external to him and so the value of his action will be merely hypothetical or dependent. Rational agents are destined to obey a law of their own. This is signified also by the fourth formula which asks a rational agent to be a law-making member of the kingdom of ends through his will<sup>3</sup>.

Now, a moral will is free or autonomous both in a negative and in a positive sense. In a negative sense Kant calls it 'free' which indicates its freedom from all sensuous inclinations and desires for particular objects, which are subject to hypothetical imperatives. In the positive sense the moral will is 'autonomous'. In this capacity, it is the law-maker of the moral world. The inherent sense of this has already been understood and will possibly be recognised as soon as it will be mentioned. The law or the objective principle by which will is determined is entirely a law of its

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 67 (Paton, p. 96).

<sup>2</sup> Paton's *Categorical Imperative*.

<sup>3</sup> *Ground Work*, pp. 74-77 (Paton, p. 85).



own, since it is produced by reason itself, though, in case of particular actions due to the imperfection of our nature, it comes to us in the form of an imperative. Will has been described by Kant 'as a kind of causality'. We act so, because we will so., So far as my reason is concerned, I act in a particular manner, because it has been so willed by me according to the principle of reason. The causality of will is characterised with freedom or autonomy. In it I am not determined by anything external to me, but by myself—the will or practical reason in me. The absolute value that is ascribed to good will is no less due to the presence of freedom. The presence of this factor has characterised our moral action as solely a creation of our own, *i.e.* of our reason. For, the selection of this will has been determined by nothing external, not even an external law. Now, if this will were determined by any external object or principle as inclinations and particular desires are by objects or hypothetical imperatives, no absolute value could have been imposed upon it. Its value would be dependent on these objects or principles and it could in its best effort possess only some conditioned or hypothetical worth. That is to say, a hypothetical imperative would have been valuable for us only if we could find an interest in the object the imperative posits as an end. But a moral will is determined by nothing outside itself. So, whatever value it contains, it contains on its own account. It can be valued for its own sake, or, in other words, can be *good in itself*, meaning that it may be of an absolute value.

Possibly, this was the reason which led Kant to consider the question of value only in the moral sphere of our life, leaving it inexplicit in other spheres. And probably because of this we find the word 'good' only in the context of his moral philosophy. Certainly we shall consider the other cases and specially the case of our aesthetic appreciation. But there are sufficient reasons for one to conclude that moral life, as it has been described by Kant, is the proper sphere for the realisation of value. The conception of absolute responsibility which is involved in the conception of freedom obviously ascribes absolute worth to my moral acts or will. When the act is my own, the sole responsibility of



it lies with myself; and whatever value my action has is due to myself and is not conditioned by anything outside me.

Another most essential fact, which distinguishes moral life as the appropriate sphere involving the question of value, is that the notion of an ideal and effort for its realisation are appreciated here so distinctly. The ideal is the absolute good, which has been found to be the 'Good will' and there is also the implication of an autonomous effort for its realisation in the form of moral act, which a moral agent performs through his attempts to fulfil his duty, *i.e.* to obey the categorical imperative of practical reason. Whether a hypothetical imperative like happiness involves appreciation of value or not, we shall consider later. But even if it does, the highest value lies in the moral sphere, as the moral ideal is determined by our own nature and moral efforts are immediately directed towards the realisation of the ideal.

### Section 6

#### *The Conditioned Good.—Insufficiency of the Definition*

Kant ascribes the highest value to the moral will, which he terms 'Good in itself' or good without any qualification. But it is by no means the only thing, which he deems valuable or good. Along with *good in itself* he admits, conditioned good, which is *good as means* to something. As Kant states in the *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*, the 'hypothetical' imperative only says that the action is *good* for some purpose *possible* or *actual*.<sup>1</sup> Hypothetical imperatives are of two kinds, technical and pragmatic. The first indicates the imperative of skill meant for the fulfilment of some particular purpose. For example, the art of navigation is *good* for shipping. This imperative may be stated in the form, "if you want to steer a ship, use the art of navigation". The art of navigation has thus a hypothetical value. The other kind of hypothetical imperative is pragmatic, which relates to the choice of means to one's own happiness, that has been defined by Kant as the total satisfaction of one's 'natural

<sup>1</sup> P. 39 (Abb., p. 31).



necessity'. The act that is necessary as a means to one's happiness, has a pragmatic value. That is, the action is valuable, because it is determined for something which is wanted by humanity in general. But looking closely into the two kinds of hypothetical imperative, one cannot but conclude that the technical imperative is at once included in the pragmatic imperative, for the particular ends, that are indicated by the technical imperative are desired, directly or indirectly, for promoting our happiness in the sense of 'well being' or 'preservation', as he says. And this is also proved by the very definition of happiness.

According to Kant, "a rational being's consciousness of the pleasantness of life uninterruptedly accompanying his whole existence, is happiness"<sup>1</sup>. Happiness is defined as "the condition of a rational being in the world with whom *everything goes according to his wish and will*."<sup>2</sup> And the principle that makes the principle of happiness the supreme ground of determination of his will is the principle of self-love.<sup>3</sup> "All material principles," Kant says, "which place the determining ground of the will in the pleasure and pain to be received from the existence of any object are all of the same kind, inasmuch as they all belong to the principle of self-love or private happiness."<sup>4</sup> What Kant means by happiness is evidently clear from his own statement quoted above. And happiness as defined by him must always mean private happiness. For, as Kant says, all material practical principles place the ground of determination of the will in the *lower* desires<sup>5</sup> that are peculiar for every individual being.

One thing to be carefully noted here is that happiness by its very definition implies the satisfaction with one's own *whole* existence, so far as his *natural* desires are concerned. Happiness is not a satisfaction of one particular or even some particular desires (sensuous desires) but is the state of existence which results from the satisfaction of all our

<sup>1</sup> *The Analytic of Pure Practical Reason*, p. 129 (Abb. p. 108).

<sup>2</sup> *Dialectic of Pure Practical Reason*, p. 266 (Abb. p. 221).

<sup>3</sup> *The Analytic of Pure Practical Reason*, pp. 129-31 (Abb. pp. 108-109).

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 130-31 (Abb., p. 109).

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 133 (Abb., p. 111).



natural desires motivated by self-love, not by the moral law. It is in fact the natural aim of all individuals, the end to which all their actions are directed before they come to be guided by the moral will alone.

Paton in his *Ground Work*<sup>1</sup> states that will or practical reason has two main functions. The first is to seek our own happiness and the second to attain the absolute good, while the first is to be subordinated to the second. But in that case, practical reason is split up in two, and what is more, reason in its practical form is said to be determined for an action for which instinct is a far better instrument.<sup>2</sup> And when in the constitution of organic nature we are asked to accept it as a principle that in it no organ is to be found for any end, unless it is also the most appropriate to that end and the best fitted for it<sup>3</sup>, why should reason be destined for an act of which it is incapable? However, we may conclude from what Kant says in the text mentioned above that, to seek happiness is one of the purposes of our life—the purpose being determined by our instinct and inclination, but which is subordinate to the superior purpose for which reason is destined. Certainly Kant himself distinguishes between moral will and will determined by particular objects or by the idea of happiness. But the latter can only be a will, which is subordinated to *lower desires*. When it is in its own power, i.e., will is in itself, not determined by anything external, its only object is to seek the good will. And Kant himself admits that *a priori* will (i.e. will by virtue of its own nature) seeks only the moral good.<sup>4</sup> But to seek happiness, then, is by no means one of the *main* functions of will. Will is reason in action, which in itself can aim to fulfil only the function for which it is specially meant. Indeed, as Kant says, “the more a cultivated reason concerns itself with the aim of enjoying life and happiness, the further does man get away from true contentment”.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ground Work*, pp. 4-8 (Paton, 18).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 5 (Paton, 63).

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 4-5 (Paton, 62-63).

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, Secs. 9 to 10 (Paton, p. 15).

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 6 (Paton, 63).





Again, good will as a condition of the goodness of all other things and desires has also been defined as the "indispensable condition of our being worthy of happiness". But the relation between happiness and morality (i.e., good will), as it has been conceived by Kant in several contexts of his works, seems to be one of antagonism. In *The Analytic of Pure Practical Reason* Kant says, "The direct opposite of the principle of morality is when the principle of *private* happiness is made the determining principle of the will".<sup>1</sup> And the position is in no way improved by taking universal happiness for private happiness; for even then, the appreciation of objects on the attainment of which happiness depends, rests on empirical data. And as an individual's judgment about them rests on his peculiar point of view, we can at best seek to provide a *general* rule, as to what may be appreciated by *most* but never a universal law (which must characterise anything which is *good* as the definition of *good* indicates) about them all. Just because in this case, an object of choice is the foundation of the rule and so the rule itself is preceded by it, it can only be a rule dependent on what is 'felt' and our decisions in such matters are highly, or to be more precise, endlessly variable.

Of course, Kant in some context indicates a closer relation between happiness and goodwill, specially when they are both included in the concept of the 'complete good' or the *summum bonum*, which is conceived there as the highest object of the moral will. There is a presupposition of the *summum bonum* in *The Analytic of Pure Practical Reason* also. There Kant is found to conceive the relation between happiness and morality as not one of antagonism, and practical reason does not claim an abolition of 'desires' altogether. He states here that to promote happiness is also our indirect duty, partly because it contains means for the fulfilment of duty and partly because the want of happiness (poverty) may tempt us to transgress our duty. Yet in the same paragraph he opposes his own statement by saying that "they (empirical principles of will which determine happiness) must all be kept apart from the supreme principle of morality and never be incorporated with it as a

<sup>1</sup> P. 148 (Abb., p. 124).



condition; since this would be to destroy all moral worth just as much as any empirical admixture with geometrical principles would destroy the certainty of mathematical evidence, which in Plato's opinion is the most excellent thing in mathematics, even surpassing their utility." <sup>1</sup> And all these prove, as we shall discuss elaborately in the next section, nothing but his inconsistency about his views on happiness.

Yet, how can good will be a condition of our being worthy of happiness? The justification which Kant offers in discussing the *summum bonum*, we shall discuss later. But as I think, a reasonable interpretation of it may be deduced from the way we ordinarily understand human desire and happiness. Human desire, even when it is a sensuous inclination, the satisfaction of which contributes to happiness, is distinguished from animal want and appetite by the fact that the former involves an element of reason. Wants and appetites are unconscious necessities, which are felt in the animal stage of organic life. At such a stage the necessities are felt without involving any definite idea of the thing which will bring their satisfaction. Desires and wishes, on the other hand, are human faculties even when determined by senses. They are necessities which present with themselves definite ideas of the objects of their satisfaction. They involve also deliberation and choice about them. We may choose some desire and reject others, or we may emphasise some while we may discard others. This indicates that they are not *mere* natural necessities but have a reason behind them to effect this deliberation possible. As happiness is the satisfaction of our desires (sensuous ones) or wishes, it cannot avoid reason altogether, in spite of instinct being its sole determining factor. And in this may lie the significance of good will's (rational will) being the indispensable condition of our being worthy of happiness. Yet, what we should always remember is that reason is only the *condition* and never the *cause* of happiness, which lies in the instinct of self-love alone, though we have just found it impossible for Kant, according to his own statement, to attach mortality to happiness even as a condition.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 224 (Abb., p. 187).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 224 (Abb., p. 187).



Happiness is a *natural necessity*, and actions which are successful as means to happiness are conditional good. But is the use of the term 'good' in this context reasonable? Is the *good as means* also like the *good in itself* the necessary object of will according to an objective principle of practical reason? Is the definition, in other words, sufficient to explain, (as a correct definition should be) both kinds of *good* consistently?

As to the first half of the definition, it is easy to answer that the actions which are *good as means* to happiness can never be necessary objects of will. This is a proven fact.

The same is true also of the latter half of the definition, which defines *good* to be what the rational will must choose according to the *objective principle of practical reason*. Can the action which is a means to happiness be chosen according to such a principle? Can we characterise such an act, in other words, by universality and necessity? "To be happy is necessarily the wish of every finite rational being, and this, therefore, is inevitably a determining principle of its faculty of desire."<sup>1</sup> It is indeed true to say so. But the idea of happiness, as Kant defines it, results from the satisfaction of *lower desires* which by its nature vary from man to man. As Kant defines the idea, between two men's happiness, there can be no point of similarity, except that of their names. And if this is so, how can the hypothetical *good* claim universality and necessity? Do not all these tend to prove that the definition does not explain hypothetical or conditioned goodness at all? And so is it not absurd to qualify it as *good*?

If this is proved all discussions about conditioned *good* will at once be deemed unmeaning. But I think, I should consider this idea with reference to the conception of the *summum bonum*.

### Section VII

#### *The Idea of the Summum Bonum. Happiness Versus Morality*

Kant has defined the moral will as the *supreme good*. But he does not take it on that account to be the complete or the perfect good. The idea of the complete good includes, beside morality, happiness, not merely in the eyes of the

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 134 (Abb., p. 112).



person who considers himself as an end, but in the judgment of impartial reason itself that makes persons in general ends in themselves. This is Kant's conception of the *summum bonum*. 'Bonum' indicates good. 'Summum' may mean either of the two things. It may mean the supreme condition, which is itself unconditioned. Or it may mean 'perfect', *i.e.* a whole which itself is not included in a greater whole. Here it applies to the idea under discussion in both the senses. It proposes itself as the unconditioned condition of all that are conditioned, as it is stated to be in the *Dialectic of Pure Practical Reason*. But as it is given to us, it also signifies the complete good or the perfect whole which includes happiness and morality and leaves no scope for a whole greater than itself.

The concept of the *summum bonum* includes 'the highest good' or the moral will and happiness proportionate to morality, the two being conceived to exist in an *a priori* or necessary relation constituting the idea of a whole. A hint of this idea has been given in the *Ground Work of the Metaphysics of Morals*<sup>1</sup>. In *The Analytic of Pure Practical Reason*<sup>2</sup> the task of promoting our happiness has been described as an indirect duty of finite rational beings. We have seen also that good will is the indispensable condition of our being worthy of happiness. Now, all these points can be criticised from Kant's own standpoint, for they appear to be inconsistent with his main position. Yet we accept them for the time being as we may find in them the points from which Kant develops his concept of the *summum bonum*. However, Kant thinks happiness to be something which a moral agent needs, (as it is an indirect duty for him) and which he also deserves (as morality is the condition of being worthy of happiness). And as he states in his *Dialectic of Pure Practical Reason*, "To need happiness, to deserve it, and yet at the same time not to participate in it, cannot be consistent with the perfect volition of a moral being possessed at the same time of all power, if for the sake of experiment, we conceive such a being"<sup>3</sup>. It signifies, in

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 4-8 (Paton, p. 64).

<sup>2</sup> P. 224 (Abb., pp. 186-87).

<sup>3</sup> Pp. 247-48 (Abb., p. 206).



other words, an ideal state of the world, where happiness is distributed as reward in proportion to morality. But within this whole, virtue or morality is always the condition, since being the highest and unconditioned good, it can have no condition above itself, while happiness always presupposes morally right behaviour as its condition. Happiness, we have seen, implies conditioned goodness and virtue, as Kant thinks, is the condition of our being worthy of happiness. Virtue, therefore, must always precede happiness, which would follow as the proportionate reward for it.

And the connection between virtue and happiness is necessary from the point of view of reason. Since we become worthy of happiness through morality alone, and since happiness is also indirectly a condition of morality reason *necessarily* conceives a relation between the two.

And the idea in which they are so related is conceived by Kant to be the necessary object of a pure practical reason. It is, as Kant says, "the object of desire of rational finite beings"<sup>1</sup>. Every will must have an object and Kant defines the object of pure practical reason to be the idea of an unconditioned whole, which alone can be appropriate to it, and which includes in itself both the "the highest good" and happiness conditioned by it.

I shall consider later the difficulties involved in accepting the *summum bonum* as the object of rational will.

However, we cannot see how virtue and happiness can be conceived to be in a necessary relation. They were conceived to be distinct and heterogeneous to each other. Kant admits this. And for this only he cannot take the relation between the two to be *analytical*, i.e. one cannot be derived from the concept of the other. The relation, he thinks, must be *synthetical*. They are conceived as related in a manner in which an event is produced by a cause, i.e. where the cause, though it is necessarily connected with the event, cannot be derived from the concept of the latter. Yet, as a relation between virtue and happiness is necessary or *a priori*, it is not derivable from experience. And so the relation is transcendental. It is both *synthetic* and *a priori*

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 247 (Abb., p. 206).



at the same time. Kant thinks it "*a priori* (morally) necessary to produce the *summum bonum* by freedom of will" and so "the condition of its possibility must rest solely on *a priori* principles of cognition".<sup>1</sup>

As Kant says, the consciousness of the determination of the faculty of desire directly by the law is the source of satisfaction in the resulting action. The feeling of satisfaction or pleasure itself results from the determination of the will directly by the moral law. As Kant says, "Morality is the *supreme good* as the first condition of the *summum bonum*, while happiness constitutes the second element, but only in such a way that it is the morally conditioned, but necessary consequence of the former".<sup>2</sup> And "only with this subordination is the *summum bonum* the whole object of pure practical reason, which must necessarily conceive it as possible, since it commands us to contribute to the utmost of our power to its realisation".<sup>3</sup>

But there is an ambiguity about what follows as a necessary result of our virtue. Is it happiness? Is it pleasure? Or is it self-contentment? Kant uses all these terms, while they seem to have quite different meanings altogether.

We have already found him stating that the moral disposition of the mind is combined necessarily with the consciousness that the will is determined directly by the law. And this consciousness is always the source of a satisfaction in the resulting action. But this pleasure, this satisfaction itself is never the determining principle of a moral action, while the determination of the action directly by the moral law is always its source<sup>4</sup>. But Kant forthwith denies it even to be a pleasure. It is not anything positive like 'a feeling of pleasure' the name which Kant has given it before. To quote his own words: "Have we not however a word, which does not express enjoyment as happiness does, but indicates a satisfaction in one's existence, an analogue of happiness,

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 251 (Abb., p. 209).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 258 (Abb., p. 215).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 257 (Abb., p. 214).



which must necessarily accompany the consciousness of virtue? Yes! the word is *self-contentment*."<sup>1</sup> This he describes as "Negative satisfaction", involved in our consciousness of our mastery over the inclinations and being determined by the moral law alone. Our freedom and the consciousness on our part of following the imperative of reason produce, as Kant says, an unaltered contentment which is necessarily connected with these and rests on no special feeling. He calls it "Intellectual contentment". Sensuous contentment, dependent on the satisfaction of our inclinations, is quite different from it. It is thus a negative contentment which is primarily a contentment with one's own person. Admittedly it is not happiness. Nor can it be bliss, which exists independently of inclinations, a state which is possible for a *holy will*. Yet it resembles bliss, for it presupposes freedom from inclinations.<sup>2</sup>

But he sometimes defines the result of our virtue as 'happiness', though it seems to be the opposite of the satisfaction we have just discussed. As Kant says, "The maxims of virtue and those of private happiness are quite heterogeneous as to their supreme practical principle; and although they belong to one *summum bonum* which together they make possible, yet they are so far from coinciding, that they restrict and check one another very much in the same subject".<sup>3</sup> And so the relation between them has been conceived to be synthetic. Kant also begins the concluding paragraph of the section *The Critical solution of the antinomy of pure practical reason*, where he offers us a discussion of the sort of satisfaction which he terms "self-contentment" or "negative satisfaction", by defining the result of morality as happiness. In Kant's own words "From this solution of the antinomy of pure practical reason, it follows that in practical principles, we may at least conceive as possible a natural and necessary connection between the consciousness of morality and the expectation of a proportionate happiness

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 257 (Abb., p. 214).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, 258 (Abb., p. 215).

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 249 (Abb., p. 208).



as its result ".<sup>1</sup> We cannot follow how this transition is possible. Further, we cannot follow what exactly Kant means by "conceived as possible" and "expectation". It may be conceived that while the negative satisfaction is an accompanying consciousness of our virtue, happiness is expected as its reward. But Kant presents the two concepts in a way that involves an amount of confusion about them and does not explain the fact that they occupy quite distinct positions in moral life.

Whatever may be about his careless or significant use of the several words here and there, we here take the word happiness to indicate the sort of satisfaction that should be the result of our absolute obedience to the moral law, as the concept of the *summum bonum* brings in the idea of God as the supreme being who will reward our virtue with happiness proportionate to it.

Now, happiness, as it is defined, rests on the harmony of physical nature with the whole end of a finite rational being and "likewise with the essential determining principle of his will".<sup>2</sup> But the point at issue here is that to effect this harmony does not lie in the power of any rational being. The acting rational being is not the cause of the world and nature herself. "There is not the least ground, therefore, in the moral law", as Kant says, "for a necessary connection between morality and proportionate happiness in a being that belongs to the world as a part of it, and therefore dependent on it, and which for that reason cannot by his will be a cause of this nature, nor by his own power make it thoroughly harmonized, as far as his happiness is concerned, with his practical principles"<sup>3</sup> Yet such a connection is necessary, for, to promote the *summum bonum* is a duty. And so Kant thinks that we are bound to postulate the existence of a Cause of all nature distinct from nature itself, and which must contain the principle of such harmonisation.<sup>4</sup> This cause is God himself. He contains in himself the principle of harmony of nature not only with the law of will

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 258 (Abb., p. 215).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 266 (Abb., p. 221).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*



of the rational being, but with the conception of this law. Thus the concept of the *summum bonum* is possible only on the supposition of a Supreme Cause, having a causality corresponding to moral character.<sup>1</sup>

We have briefly discussed the fundamental points of Kant's philosophy of the *good*. The *good in itself* we have taken up first and then the discussion of what Kant considers as conditioned goodness. Last of all we have come to the conception of the *summum bonum*. Kant expects to find in this conception the unconditioned totality of the objects of practical reason.<sup>2</sup> But the main point of interest here is Kant's attempt for a compromise between morality and happiness.

Now we proceed to consider the difficulties that arise from the treatment of the *good*.

### Section VIII

#### *A critical estimate of the problem of the Good*

Have we found in this discussion any definite answer to the question of value?

To recapitulate what we have discussed so far, we have first of all considered Kant's definition of *good* and then the two kinds of *good*. The one is the *good-in-itself*, the other is a mere conditioned good. They are respectively *good will* and acts that are *good as means* to happiness. Happiness has primarily been conceived as being opposed to morality. But there is the concept of the *summum bonum*, conceived to be the necessary object of morality, in which happiness and moral will of necessity combine in such a manner that happiness is regarded as a reward for the latter. And God is postulated as the Supreme Cause to reward virtue with proportionate amount of happiness, to effect which does not lie in the power of a rational being.

Now, if we are asked whether goodness is here equal to value as such or whether goodness is only moral value, we

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 266-67 (Abb., p. 221).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 243 (Abb., p. 203).



feel difficulty in answering in either way, and this is due to the confusion created by Kant himself. In *The Analytic of Pure Practical Reason*, when Kant defines *good*, he connects it with a moral possibility<sup>1</sup>, and it is natural for any one to take the word 'good' in this context to mean moral value only. And possibly, Kant has this in mind when he connects goodness with moral possibility. Yet we cannot put the matter in this way because Kant often recognises the *good as means*. There are admittedly, according to Kant, three kinds of good attached to the three imperatives, technical, pragmatic and categorical or moral. His main concern throughout is with the moral good alone, yet the other two can in no way be overlooked. Are we to conclude therefore, that he proposes here a discussion of moral and non-moral values, *i.e.* a discussion of value in general and of moral value in particular? In that case the *good* will be a synonym for 'valuable'. But we cannot answer the question unless we are in a position to give our opinion on his *Critique of Judgment*, *i.e.* whether it gives any clue to another kind of value. Yet, his treatment could have been given a consistent form, at least from one point of view, if we could have answered the question in the affirmative, though other difficulties would still remain.

The difficulty which strikes us first when we enter directly upon the Kantian theory of the *good*, is about the adequacy of his definition of the *good*. The 'highest good' or the good will certainly follows from the definition. But difficulty arises in explaining the acts which are means to happiness (and which includes technical good also) as *good*, even if their goodness is conceived to be conditioned. We fail to realise how the same definition can cover this kind of good as well.

The *good* as defined by Kant, is the necessary object of desire (practical reason or reason in action), according to the objective principle of practical reason. Does the *good as means* follow consistently from this definition as goodwill follows from it? Kant, of course, attempts a defence of his

<sup>1</sup> P. 177 (Abb. p. 148).



own position by saying, that even in the case of *good as means* the goodness of an action is determined by the same principle as in the case of the goodwill, for "judgment on the relation of means to ends certainly belongs to reason"<sup>1</sup>. Still it remains dubitable how far the difficulty regarding the *good as means* is actually removed. For, though the relation of means and ends as an abstract relation may be subject to the judgment of reason, yet it is not the abstract relation itself, or the judgment about it, from which the goodness of an action is actually derived. What determines an action in such a case is not reason itself, but a concrete object of sense and the susceptibility of human mind to it. Whether any particular action is good as means to anything or not, is not determined by its being subject to rational judgment, but by its success or failure as means to the attainment of the object we desire (not the necessary object of a rational desire). And we all know that objects of such desire are variable, for they are chosen according to the reaction of our sensible nature to them, which by its very nature varies from man to man, and even from moment to moment. But all such desires are ultimately resolved into our desire for happiness, as it is evident from the very definition of the term. What we have to enquire into, therefore, is whether or not our actions as means to happiness are necessary objects of rational desire, according to the objective principle of practical reason. So to do this we have to analyse the concept of *happiness* itself once again. "A rational being's consciousness of the pleasantness of life uninterruptedly accompanying his whole existence is happiness; and the principle which makes this the supreme ground of determination of the will is the principle of self love."<sup>2</sup>

The very definition exposes itself by the use of the word 'pleasantness'. Since, as Kant thinks, "This is opposed even to the usage of language, which distinguishes the *pleasant* from the *good*, the *unpleasant* from the *evil*"<sup>3</sup>. In the *Critique of Judgment*, Kant clearly distinguishes

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 178 (Abb., p. 149).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 130-31 (Abb., pp. 108-09).

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 178 (Abb., p. 149).



the 'pleasant' or 'agreeable' from the 'good'.<sup>1</sup> Yet he says, when an object determines the *good* the determining principle is the idea of pleasantness attached to it.<sup>2</sup> That is to say, we choose a certain object only because of the amount of pleasure it promises us; and this, as we know, is highly relative from its very nature.

And what appears from the definition of happiness as a continuous state of pleasantness through the whole of one's existence, is that it is an indefinite idea. This is so, not only because of the fact that pleasantness cannot be attached to an object *a priori*, but also because of the fact that on account of its being concerned with one's whole existence, we cannot claim to know what are the objects of all our desires unless we come to the end of our life, when such knowledge would be useless.

We must remember that happiness for Kant inevitably means private happiness, which is concerned with self-love alone. But if so, it cannot contain any determining principle other than those belonging to *lower desires*.<sup>3</sup> How can an action which is a means to the satisfaction of a lower desire be *good*? It is not a necessary object of rational will, for rational will is opposed to such desires that are motivated by instinct. These are not determined by the objective principle of practical reason, for the lower desires are by their very nature extremely relative varying with the changing attitude of our sensible nature.

The incapability of the acts as means to happiness of being *good*, appears also in the *Ground Work*. There Kant describes cultivated reason as removed from its true contentment if it aims at happiness.<sup>4</sup> And what thus removes us from reason, can neither be its necessary object nor be in accordance with any principle of it. And Kant plainly admits in this passage that not reason, but instinct is the true instrument for the attainment of happiness, and if reason is selected for this purpose, the selection must be a wrong one.

<sup>1</sup> *Critique of Judgment*, Sec. First Moment (Meredith Ed. 1911).

<sup>2</sup> *The Analytic of Pure Practical Reason*, p. 129 (Abb., p. 108).

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 133 (Abb., p. 111).

<sup>4</sup> *Ground Work*, pp. 4-8 (Paton, p. 63).



Thus the conditioned good does in no way follow from Kant's definition of the *good*. Therefore, either, the definition itself must be changed, or there should be no *good as means* to happiness.

We may quote in this connection what Paton says about the consistency of Kant's treatment of the *good* in his *Categorical Imperative* :

" Whatever may be thought as to the defect of Kant's account of goodness, there is a certain attraction in his attempt to see the different senses of good as constituting a developing series under a common concept. Nor is it difficult to understand how on his view, the higher good at times overrides the lower; for the principle of skill takes into account only one desire and one end; the principle of prudence takes into account all the desires and all the ends of an agent; the principle of morality, whatever else it does, the desire and ends of all agents, so far at least as they may be affected by the agent's sensation."<sup>1</sup> What Paton says about the three kinds of *good* determined by the principles of skill, prudence and morality respectively, is possibly true. But this alone is not sufficient to explain them as a 'series under a common concept'. For, to form a 'series under a common concept', they need to conform to a definite standard, in spite of maintaining a variation of grades amongst themselves. They must share the common quality, which would be able to explain them all. And that this is not true of Kant's three kinds of *good* is possibly evident from what we have so far said.<sup>2</sup>

But the confusion regarding the different kinds of *good* does not end with the definition of *good*. It is definitely involved in the concept of the *summum bonum*, which as the necessary object of practical reason combines in itself happiness and morality. The issue to be considered here is the relation between happiness and morality.

<sup>1</sup> *The Categorical Imperative*, p. 110.

<sup>2</sup> N.B.—But Paton seems to change his idea about the three kinds of *good*. For in his work *In Defence of Reason* he says that when we speak of the three kinds of *good*, we apply the term 'good' in different senses (p. 160, foot-note, edn. 1951).



Before we come to the *Dialectic of Pure Practical Reason*, which offers a systematic discussion of this concept, traces of the concept of the *summum bonum* are found in *The Analytic of Pure Practical Reason*, and there are statements in his pre-critical ethical works also which tend towards such an idea. And possibly Kant makes the statement at the very outset so that in drawing the concept at the end of his treatment, he may not be accused of inconsistency. But difficulty lies in the very definition of the ideas, which he likes to combine in one single concept. As Kant says in the *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*<sup>1</sup> virtue or good will is the indispensable condition of our being worthy of happiness. It is also said that happiness is good so far as it is determined by the law of reason.<sup>2</sup> But "the direct opposite of the principle of morality is, when the principle of *private* happiness<sup>3</sup> is made the determining principle of the will"<sup>4</sup> But how can one thing be reasonably determined by another, if the two are opposed to each other? The analysis of the concept of 'Happiness' given before reminds us of the fact that the idea of happiness originates from sensuous desires, which are by their very nature opposed to rational will as such. Morality, in fact, establishes itself only in its freedom from all such *lower desires*. In that case it is not conceivable how happiness, which results from satisfaction of *lower desires* finds its place in moral life.

Certainly, Kant admits a distinction between virtue and happiness. And for this reason, he connects them up, not analytically but only synthetically in the concept of the *summum bonum*. The heteronomy of the two ideas raises an antinomy, which he solves by removing the confusion between phenomena and noumena.<sup>5</sup> In fact, he finds difficulty not in combining the two conflicting concepts in a single whole, but in the possibility of actually (physically)

<sup>1</sup> P. 12 (Abb., p. 9).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *The Analytic of Pure Practical Reason*—Happiness for Kant means private happiness, p. 131 (Abb. p. 109).

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 178 (Abb., p. 149).

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 148 (Abb., p. 124).





producing happiness by virtue. But does not the real difficulty lie in the very concept of the *summum bonum*? How can happiness be a reward for morality? The idea of happiness has its source in the sensuous desires of mankind, only by overcoming which morality can come into existence. How is it that the satisfaction of the same sort of desires is conceived to be the only reward which virtue deserves? Kant would, of course, say that this happiness is a disinterested one,<sup>1</sup> and the moral law is here the only determining principle of will, while happiness or pleasure does not determine our will, but follows directly as a necessary consequence from our consciousness of the determination of the will by the law.<sup>2</sup> Kant also says, as we have seen, that the adjustment of happiness in exact proportion to virtue is performed by God, the Supreme Cause. But the satisfaction of *lower desires* cannot be a reward for morality even if it comes from the hand of the Supreme Agent himself. How can a whole, which implies such an improper combination be called a *perfect* whole? How can we conceive God, the Supreme Perfect Being to effect such a contradiction? Nor can we reasonably consider happiness a help to morality in any way, for morality itself presupposes freedom from the desires that determine happiness. It cannot be our duty to promote happiness even indirectly.<sup>3</sup> What leads Kant to imagine such a relation between virtue and happiness is possibly a question of justice, that a virtuous man should not suffer. So he considers it to be our duty to promote happiness.<sup>4</sup> A happy man having the peace of mind may attempt to be virtuous with all his capacities, while the want of happiness *i.e.* poverty, as he says, may tempt him to neglect his duty by compelling him to seek the satisfaction of his 'natural necessities' throughout his life. But we have found it impossible to combine the two ideas on any possible ground without changing their definitions. And moreover,

<sup>1</sup> *Dialectic of Pure Practical Reason*, pp. 265-66 (Abb., pp. 220-21).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 254-55 (Abb., pp. 212-13).

<sup>3</sup> *The Analytic of Pure Practical Reason*, pp. 223-24 (Abb. pp. 186-87).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*



moral life is always a life of conflict between temptations and duties. A true moral man would always try to fulfil his moral obligations in spite of all temptations and miseries. The test of the strength of a moral character lies in one's urge for doing the duty. The weakness of Kant's moral theory is due to his neglect of this question of conflict. He admits that in being moral we must be free from all sensuous inclinations. But he never gives the question of moral conflict the place in moral life it deserves. All conflicts for him are before we enter into moral life. The moment we are moral, there is no conflict whatsoever. Certainly this state of freedom Kant denies to be eternal for man. It is so only for God. Yet the moment we are moral, we are above all conflicts. In moral life there is no place for conflict according to Kant. He is rather anxious to eliminate the possibility of any conflict and to provide virtue with its adequate reward.

Goodwill has been endowed with an absolute worth by Kant. It is something which is good without any qualification, *i.e.*, possesses an unconditioned value in itself. We fail to understand why Kant conceives happiness as a necessary reward for it. Even if the adjustment of the appropriate reward is made by God himself, is not the value of morality made dependent to some extent at least on the *necessary* effect of morality itself?

Let us consider certain objections that can be raised to the conception of the *summum bonum* as the *necessary* object of the moral will. "The realization of the *summum bonum* in the world", says Kant, "is the necessary object of a will determinable by the moral law"<sup>1</sup>. In fact, he takes up the discussion of the *summum bonum* in order to find in it the unconditioned totality of the objects of a moral will, as he says in the opening section of his *Dialectic of Pure Practical Reason*<sup>2</sup>. What he means is that a will which is moral, *i.e.*, determined by the moral law alone, must necessarily seek the *summum bonum* as the necessary object of its desire, a concept which combines in it the conceptions

<sup>1</sup> *Dialectic of Pure Practical Reason*, p. 263 (Abb., p. 218).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 243 (Abb., p. 203).



of morality and happiness. It is, as we have seen, a 'complete good', a 'perfect good' which includes the highest good as well as happiness appropriate to it.

Possibly he conceives this *whole* in order to effect a reconciliation between the two sides of will, *i.e.*, between will as it is in itself and will as it is subordinate to sensuous desires. But we do not think that there is much scope for such an explanation. For he always defines the *summum bonum* as the necessary object of pure practical reason, *i.e.*, a *priori* will, which has been found to be a moral will. The necessary object of such a will, as it is described, is the unconditioned absolute goodwill.<sup>1</sup> And morality is also found to be the direct opposite of happiness.<sup>2</sup> How does Kant conceive the moral will to aim necessarily at something which includes happiness in it? Does it not involve a contradiction? We have seen that it does.

Again, moral will is a will that *wills itself*. The good has been defined as the *necessary object of practical reason*, according to the objective principle of it. And what correctly conforms to this definition, *i.e.* what Kant describes as the only thing good without any qualification is goodwill. And the function of a moral will is to manifest a will which is good in itself, *i.e.*, to realise the goodwill.<sup>3</sup> We have also found that an action which is morally good must be done only for the sake of duty.<sup>4</sup> Not any hope of pleasure, nor any desire for any empirical object, but the obedience to the categorical imperative, the absolute reverence for the moral law should be the only motive to lead us to moral actions. Is it not a contradiction then to ask a moral agent to look for the *summum bonum*? Are we not thereby placed in the absurd position that a moral action should be inspired both by the sense of obedience to the moral law and by the desire to promote the *summum bonum* at one and the same time?

<sup>1</sup> *Ground Work*, pp. 4-8 (Paton, pp. 17-18).

<sup>2</sup> *The Analytic of Pure Practical Reason*, p. 148 (Abb. p. 124).

<sup>3</sup> *Ground Work*, pp. 4-8 (Paton, pp. 17-18).

<sup>4</sup> Happiness for Kant means private happiness: *The Analytic of Pure Practical Reason*, p. 131 (Abb., p. 109).



It may be contended that the moral law is the sole determining principle of the will, while the *summum bonum* is its object. We may even be inclined to conceive this in the fashion in which a mind determined by the instinct of self-love aspires after happiness. But on Kant's showing, this is not possible. For the moral law for him is not only a determining principle of the moral will, but the only principle to determine the moral will; the will which claims to be moral must be *directly* determined by this law alone. But is not a will directly determined by its object? And if the moral law alone determines a will directly, how can the *summum bonum* be its necessary object?

A contradiction is involved even in taking the *summum bonum* as good. The *summum bonum* has been defined as the complete or the perfect good. But one of its constituents, namely happiness, cannot be called good according to the definition we have already discussed. How can a concept, one part of which is not good, can be called good at all? And how is the word 'perfect' justified as a qualification of this concept? Should we then mean by the *perfect good* the highest good (morality) *plus* something opposed to it, *i.e.*, happiness? It seems that Kant wants to lead us to an idea similar to Hegel's Absolute, but the contradictory elements, namely morality and happiness are not synthesised in the concept of the *summum bonum*; they are simply placed side by side, one being conceived to determine the other.

Another objection regarding the same point is that good and evil as Kant conceives them, always involve a reference to will<sup>1</sup>. They are never directly determined by an object or an idea of it. Good and evil are, properly speaking, referred to actions only. If anything is to be good or evil in the absolute sense, it must be a will or its maxim or the manner of acting and consequently the acting person. These qualifications can never be adequately applied to objects.<sup>2</sup> But the *summum bonum* includes

<sup>1</sup> *The Analytic of Pure Practical Reason*, p. 180 (Abb. p. 151).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 180 (Abb., p. 151).





happiness, which is itself not a will and which is only a state of mind produced by the satisfaction of various *lower desires*. How can the *summum bonum* be called *good* in the proper sense of the term?

Kant conceives the necessary interference of God for the purpose of distributing happiness in accordance with virtue. The necessity of God's interference has possibly been much decreased from one point of view, as the very conception of happiness as a reward for virtue has been questioned. The appearance of God here as an external agent is not only external to the system of morality, but even seems to be accidental. Because we think that happiness is necessary and because it lies beyond our capacity to attain it, it does not follow that we must imagine a supernatural agent, who will fulfil the purpose for us.

But there is a possibility of confusion as to the exact nature of the contentment which Kant conceives to follow from our complete obedience to the moral law. Indeed the satisfaction which, as Kant often says, results from our consciousness of the determination of our will directly by the law, leaves no scope for the intervention of any external agent like God. This satisfaction he has variously described—as 'a feeling of pleasure' (which he must mean to distinguish from the pleasure resulting from the satisfaction of sensuous desire, though he does not explicitly state the distinction) or 'negative satisfaction' or 'self-contentment'. As he says, "The determination of the will directly by reason is the source of the feeling of pleasure, and this remains a pure practical not sensible determination of the faculty of desire" <sup>1</sup>.

"Have we not, however, a word which does not express enjoyment, as happiness does, but indicates a satisfaction in one's existence, an analogue of the happiness which must necessarily accompany the consciousness of virtue? Yes! this word is *self-contentment*, which in its proper significance always designates only a negative

<sup>1</sup> *Dialectic of Pure Practical Reason*, pp. 252-58 (Abb., pp. 210-15).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 255 (Abb., p. 213).



satisfaction in one's existence, in which one is conscious of needing nothing. Freedom and the consciousness of it as a faculty of following the moral law with unyielding resolution is *independence on inclinations* at least as motives determining (though not as *affecting*) our desire, and so far as I am conscious of this freedom in following my moral maxims, it is the only source of an unaltered contentment which is necessarily connected with it and rests on no special feeling."<sup>1</sup> This sort of satisfaction has also been defined as an 'intellectual contentment'<sup>2</sup> as distinguished from the sensible contentment, which results from the satisfaction of inclination. It is further stated that "Freedom itself becomes in this way (namely indirectly)<sup>3</sup> capable of an enjoyment which cannot be called happiness, because it does not depend on the positive concurrence of a feeling, nor is it strictly speaking *bliss*, since it does not include complete independence on inclinations and wants, but it resembles bliss in so far as the determination of one's will at least can hold itself free from their influence; and thus at least in its origin, this enjoyment is analogous to the self-sufficiency which we can ascribe only to the Supreme Being."<sup>4</sup>

Now one thing which is clear from the above quotations is that this satisfaction which is termed 'self-contentment', or 'feeling of pleasure' or 'negative satisfaction' naturally results from our consciousness of our virtue. As we see, the relation between morality and this satisfaction is analytical, and we need not conceive God to relate the two. It has been explicitly stated that this sort of contentment, whatever name we give to it, is altogether different from happiness. But the conclusion which Kant draws from this discussion leaves us in confusion. In fact, we cannot follow the transition from these data to the conclusion of the section, *The Critical Solution of the Antinomy of Practical Reason* which he begins with the words, "From this solution of the

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 255-57 (Abb. p. 214).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Because freedom from inclination produces virtue, and virtue produces this contentment.

<sup>4</sup> *Dialectic of Pure Practical Reason*, pp. 257-58 (Abb. p. 215).



antinomy of pure practical reason it follows that in practical principles we may at least conceive as possible a natural and necessary connection between the consciousness of morality and the expectation of a proportionate happiness as its result, though it does not follow that we can know or perceive this connection; that, on the other hand, principles of the pursuit of happiness cannot possibly produce morality; that, therefore, morality is the *supreme* good (as the first condition of the *summum bonum*, while happiness constitutes its second element, but only in such a way that it is the morally conditioned, but necessary consequence of the former)."<sup>1</sup> Here the term 'happiness' occurs again, though the self-contentment which Kant has discussed in the previous paragraph has been distinguished from happiness.

Evidently we are in a confusion. If we take the word 'happiness' to mean 'self-contentment' (or 'negative satisfaction' or 'intellectual contentment') in this context, we must take it in a sense which is distinct from the sense in which Kant generally takes it, *i.e.* as a state of mind which follows from the satisfaction of our inclinations and which is opposed to morality as such. It seems that we need to do so, if the relation between morality and happiness is a *natural and necessary* one and if happiness is the *morally conditioned but necessary consequence* of morality.<sup>2</sup> And if so, we find no necessity of conceiving God to exercise His power to connect happiness with morality and there exists no problem or antinomy regarding the relation between virtue and happiness. But it does not appear that Kant has a mind to come to such a conclusion. For, he has always stated the relation between happiness and morality in the *summum bonum* to be a synthetic relation.<sup>3</sup> And in one of the following sections he explicitly states that "Accordingly, the existence of a cause of all nature, distinct from nature itself, and containing the principle of this

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 148 (Abb., p. 124).

<sup>2</sup> Note the above quotation.

<sup>3</sup> The Antinomy of Pure Practical Reason, p. 251 (Abb. p. 209).



connection, namely, of the exact harmony of happiness with morality, is also *postulated* ".<sup>1</sup>

It may be conceived, as we suggested above, that self-contentment is the subjective feeling of satisfaction due to our absolute obedience to the imperative of reason, while happiness should be the reward of our virtue. But Kant never states this point of distinction between the two kinds of contentment so far as their place in moral life is concerned. Moreover, even if this suggestion be taken to be a plausible explanation of Kant's theory, the conflict between morality and happiness is not resolved thereby.

### Section IX

*Our appreciation of the Beautiful. What is its significance in the question of value?*

Three kinds of value, as we have seen, are known to exist according to Plato. And these are truth, goodness and beauty. We have already discussed the former two. Now we proceed to consider the last one. We have to enquire here also whether our judgment of the beautiful involves any question of value, and if it does, what is the nature of this value—subjective or objective, conditioned or unconditioned? Has it any point of similarity with moral values, or with happiness? Is it anything like cognitive validity? Or, is it something unique by itself?

Let us begin with Kant's own words. "If we wish to discern whether anything is beautiful or not, we do not refer the representation of it to the object by means of understanding with a view to cognition, but by means of the imagination (acting perhaps in conjunction with understanding) we refer the representation to the subject and its feeling of pleasure or displeasure. The judgment of taste therefore is not a cognitive judgment and so not logical, but is aesthetic—which means that it is one, whose determining *ground* cannot be other than subjective."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Dialectic of Pure Practical Reason*, p. 266 (Abb. p. 221).

<sup>2</sup> *Critique of Judgment*, p. 204 (Meredith, Ed. 1911, pp. 41-42).



All representations are capable of being objective in their reference, as Kant says,<sup>1</sup> except the feeling of pleasure or displeasure the sole reference to which lies in the subject and the way he is affected by *representation* of objects (and not the objects themselves). There is nothing objective in our delight in a representation as it refers only to the subject's feeling of pleasure or displeasure.

So it comes about that our judgments of beauty are concerned with these subjective feelings alone. The object of such judgments is the beautiful. The distinctive characteristics of such judgments come out through the distinction that Kant makes among *agreeable*, *good* and *beautiful*.

The judgment of taste, as we are told, is concerned with delight in a representation. Now a delight which we connect with the real existence of an object is called interest. Such a delight involves a relation to the faculty of desire, either as its determining ground or as necessarily implicated with that (the determining ground).<sup>2</sup> Both *agreeable* and *good* involve such reference. Delight in them is determined, not merely by the representation of the object, but also "by a represented bond of connection between subject and real existence of the object".<sup>3</sup> It is involved, in other words, not merely in the representation of the object, but in its real existence.

Kant defines *agreeable* as that "which the senses find pleasing in sensation".<sup>4</sup> That the judgment about the agreeableness of an object involves interest in it is evident from the fact that through sensation it provokes desire for similar objects. So the delight involved is determined not even by the simple judgments about the objects, but by the bearing the real existence of the object has upon one's state of mind, so far as he is affected by it. An *agreeable*, therefore, not merely *pleases* us, but it *gratifies*.

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 204 (Meredith, p. 42).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 204 (Meredith, p. 42).

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 209-10 (Meredith, p. 48).

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 206 (Meredith, p. 44).



And gratification implies, gratification of actual objects of desire.

Next we pass on to the delight in the *good*. The definition of *good* as given by Kant, is well known. "That is good which by means of reason, commends itself by its mere concept."<sup>1</sup> Both the *good* as means and *good* in itself imply concept of an end and the relation of reason to will for realising it (as Kant says). Delight does follow from the realisation of this concept, *i.e.* the real existence of some object or action and so it is connected with some sort of interest. The *good*, in other words, not merely *please* but is 'esteemed' or 'approved', as he says. Now the fact which first of all distinguishes the delight in the *beautiful* from the former delights is that a judgment of the *beautiful* is independent of all sorts of interest. Kant says that "Every one must allow that a judgment on the beautiful which is tinged with slightest interest, is very partial and not a pure judgment of taste".<sup>2</sup> When we judge something to be beautiful, we are not in the least concerned with the fact, whether the object actually exists or not, nor are we troubled with any effort for realising the object itself. Our only concern is with the representation, which we have in our mind, and judge the object to be beautiful by virtue of its effect on our feeling of pleasure. A judgment of this kind is merely contemplative.

When an interest (even a moral one) determines a delight, there is left no scope for choice. The delight in this case depends on the existence of certain of objects or actions. But the appreciation of the *beautiful* is a case of *free delight*, where our being pleased with a certain object (*i.e.* a representation) depends on nothing but our free choice, independent of all inclinations and interests. "Taste is," therefore, "faculty of estimating an object or a mode of representation by means of a delight or aversion, *apart from any interest*. The only object of such a delight is called beautiful".<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 207-208 (Meredith, p. 46).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 205 (Meredith, p. 43).

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 211 (Meredith, p. 50).



From this characteristic of a judgment of taste Kant draws its universality. "For, when any one is conscious that his delight in an object is with him independent of interest, it is inevitable that he should look on the object as one containing a ground of delight for all men."<sup>1</sup> What he means is that the delight in the beautiful, not being based on any interest, or inclination, which binds a man to a peculiar sphere, may claim to be universal, *i.e.* may leave it open to be appreciated by any one in the universe, *i.e.* may demand the agreement of all on this appreciation. But this universality cannot follow from concepts, as there is no passage from concepts to feeling of pleasure or displeasure. The concepts imply a universality, which is objective in nature, while the judgment of taste claims only a subjective universality. This at once marks its distinction from *agreeable* and *good*. The former is based merely on private feelings, and raises no question of universality at all; whereas, the latter is concerned with an objective universality through concepts. Kant's point of banishing concepts from the sphere of the judgment of taste lies in his opinion that, there can be no rule for our appreciation of beauty. It is something unique and original. And yet, when one says that something is beautiful, he claims to speak in a universal voice.

The feeling of pleasure, therefore, in the case of our judgment of taste must be capable of being universally communicated. And, as Kant says, "The universal capacity for being communicated incidental to the mental state in the given representation which is the subjective condition of the judgment of taste must be fundamental, with the pleasure in the object as its consequent".<sup>2</sup> But nothing except cognition and representation so far as appurtenant to cognition is capable of being universally communicated. A representation is objective in so far as it pertains to cognition and it is this that gives it a universal reference with which the power of representation of every one can harmonise. If then the

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, 211-12 (Meredith, p. 50).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 217 (Meredith, p. 57).



determining ground of the judgment as to this universal communicability is merely subjective, it is nothing but the mental state that presents itself in the mutual relation of the powers of representation, so far as they refer in a given representation to cognition in general (as it refers to no definite cognition). In the knowledge-situation, a representation, whereby an object is given, involves *imagination*, for bringing together the manifold of intuitions, and understanding for uniting them under concepts. But in aesthetic appreciation understanding does not afford us any definite concept, but supplies only a general idea of law. The subjective universality, therefore, is the mental state present in the free play of imagination and understanding, so far as these are in mutual accord, as required for cognition in general. The feeling of pleasure follows from the harmony among the cognitive faculties themselves. This subjective universality expresses itself through sense, for it cannot be known through understanding, as it is not given in the form of concept. And Kant bases the element of necessity involved in our judgment of taste on a *common* sense, for the universal communicability of feeling presupposes it.<sup>1</sup>

But though he finds the *a priori* of judgments of the beautiful upon a *common* sense (what he means possibly to be a sense common to all), he does not totally rule out reason from the world of beauty. This is proved from the classification he makes in the *Critique of Aesthetic Judgment* among pleasant, good and beautiful. The first he deems to be possible for all sensuous beings as such, good for all rational beings, and beautiful for all beings who are both sensuous and rational at the same time.

Now we have to consider whether our appreciation of beauty as Kant defines it, involves any concept of value. If we stick to our point that value must involve a definite ideal and efforts for the appreciation of it, the conclusion which seems to follow from Kant's own statements is that it cannot involve any. For the ideal is then connected with conditioned judgment alone, while true judgment of beauty must

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 239 (Meredith, p. 84).



be original and unique. True appreciation of beauty must be free from all determinations. We cannot determine it by any definite ideal, which involves a concept. The appreciation must be an independent creation of the heart of the agent himself, freed from all interests, inclinations or definite concepts. When it is thus appreciated, it appeals to all hearts by virtue of a *common* sense. But in its true form, it cannot be realised by imitation of others. Every one must do it for himself. So there is no question of effort in the context of the appreciation of the *beautiful*. As the appreciation is not pre-determined by anything, we cannot prepare ourselves beforehand for such appreciation in the way we do for the realisation of the moral value. It is, if we can say so, a creation of the moment, though unlike pure sensuous pleasure, it is communicable to all. Should we come to this conclusion therefore that our appreciation of beauty is devoid of all values? Apparently, as we find, we must answer 'Yes'.

Yet we cannot accept this conclusion at once. Our appreciation of beauty has certainly no definite ideal as we have in the case of morality, or even any definite standard like cognitive validity. There is no concept or idea, the conformity to which alone determines the form of a judgment of taste. For in that case it would be a case of conditioned taste. But we cannot deny that certain judgments are true appreciations of beauty, while others are not. When beauty is appreciated without being determined by any internal or external condition; when, in other words, it is a unique, original appreciation of a representation, which has reference to our feeling of pleasure, we have the true appreciation of the *beautiful*. Hence though there is no *ideal concept* of beauty, there is an implication in Kant's theory of *an ideal form of appreciation*. And even if no one can imagine of a regular procedure for its realisation, one may at least be asked to make an indirect effort by trying to free himself from all interests (of inclinations or of concepts) when he appreciates anything as beautiful.

So there is an implication of value in our aesthetic appreciation, though Kant himself does not say anything



expressly about it. It is not a value which is concerned either with a definite concept of perfection or with one of validity, which can be realised through a regular pre-determined process. The ideal is here uniqueness, originality and being completely independent of all interests, and so every one must judge the beautiful for himself. But as soon as it is appreciated it acquires a unique, unconditioned, absolute value by virtue of itself. And it finds itself at once communicable to all hearts that have a capacity of taste.

Here we cannot enter into any elaborate discussion of this critique. And so we pass on to the concluding section of our discussion.

### Section X

*Conclusion: What idea of value does finally follow from Kant's treatment?*

In the previous sections I have tried to give a brief discussion on the concept of value as I find it in Kant's philosophy. I shall now make an estimate of what we have so far achieved.

As we have seen, the question of value does not arise in the sphere of knowledge in the proper sense of the term 'value'. For the ideal in knowledge is externally determined, and the process of realisation of a correct form of knowledge is also extremely determined for us. There is no scope for freedom in either case. Knowledge may acquire validity, but not value. Truth lies beyond its sphere. And it may be said to possess utility, or 'technical value' as the knowledge of some art may help a definite purpose. But this 'technical value' is not *good* as for Kant *good* is a definite concept to which it fails to conform.

We need not repeat here the case of moral value. Moral life involves a definite ideal and also moral efforts for the realisation of it. The *summum bonum*, as we have seen, cannot satisfy the necessary conditions of being the moral ideal, for not only it is impossible to be realised but it also assumes a union of self-contradictory ideas. The only thing which can be the ideal of moral life is the goodwill. We have therefore



in this context of our life, an *absolute objective* value, which resides only in our moral life and its activities.

What Kant calls *good as means*, is a source of much trouble. It cannot be *good* in the correct sense of the word, and so far as it claims to be *good* even in a conditioned sense, we cannot ascribe any value to it. But if we exclude it from the category of *good*, it may be said to possess a pragmatic value as means to happiness, the common end of all human beings. If we accept the definition of happiness as a *natural necessity*, the actions which are means to it are valuable as such. But Kant's definition of happiness is indefinite. The form and constituent of happiness vary from man to man, and so also does the means for its attainment. Of course a greater amount of freedom is involved in the selection of the exact form of happiness one desires for oneself, and the determination of the means to it, than is involved in the case of knowledge. So if we could avoid the use of the term 'good' in qualifying the acts which are means to happiness we would impose a pragmatic value upon them (as Kant wishes to do). And that such value would be subjective we have already understood. For a particular form of action is valuable only for a particular form of happiness, which is peculiar to a particular agent.

Kant himself does not use the term *value* even once in reference to our appreciation of the *beautiful*. Nor does such an idea directly follow from what he says about it. But, as we have found, his statement about our judgment of the *beautiful* implies the idea of a value, which is unique, original and absolute. To the judgment of the *beautiful* Kant ascribes universality and necessity. It is also subjective as he calls it. But we fail to understand, how a judgment which is universal and necessary, *i.e.* determined by a standard, however indefinitely defined, is not an objective judgment. The lack of a definite concept in the case of such judgments may prevent them from being objective. But are not universality and necessity themselves sufficient to make anything objective? The difficulty about it all, as we have seen, is due to Kant's attempt to make a way between feeling of pleasure and universality. If the judgment of taste rests on the former, it would be subjective, as



it has been defined; if, on the other hand, it is universal and is relative to an ideal standard, it must be objective. Thus there is difficulty in accepting a judgment of the *beautiful* to be either subjective or objective even though Kant takes it to be both subjective and universal.

So, we conclude that Kant considers moral life to involve an absolute, unconditioned objective value. Indirect implication of value may be traced in the context of our aesthetic appreciation and also in our pursuit of happiness. But in that case, value must mean something quite different from *goodness* as Kant takes it to be.

Possibly we have already found an answer to a question raised at the outset as to whether goodness and value mean the same for Kant. Kant never uses the word 'value' in reference to knowledge, nor does he use it in qualifying our aesthetic appreciation. He makes use of the term only in reference to what has any connection with our practical reason. He also employs the term 'good' in this context. Therefore, for Kant, so far as his statements are concerned, *goodness* and *value* are synonymous. But according to the strict definition of the word 'good' that Kant offers in the *Critique of Practical Reason* we cannot employ the term with reference to what he calls technical and pragmatic values. If we consider the indirect presence of value in our judgments of the *beautiful* as defined by him, the concept of 'value' transcends the concept of *good*.

With this we propose to close our discussion. I must, however, state that Kant was a pioneer in the field of philosophy of value. His system, in fact, inspires the development of a major philosophical theory now known as Idealism.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE CONCEPT OF VALUE IN HEGEL'S PHILOSOPHY

#### *Section I*

The philosophy of Hegel is a great contribution to the development of the theory of value. For his concept of value Bosanquet is indeed indebted to Hegel. According to Hegel, self-realisation is the central principle of the universe. I shall make this point clear as I proceed. For the present I only need to say that in Hegel's theory of reality the concept of value has not only an empirical, but also a metaphysical significance. Of course, here we are not going to have a detailed study of Hegel's philosophy. Our only concern is his theory of value, and we shall look into his metaphysics as far as necessary for this purpose.

#### *Section II*

At first view Hegel's philosophy appears to be rather mystical and is susceptible of being differently interpreted. And this is due not only to the abstract nature of his ideas, but also to the abstract way of its being presented.

So far as I understand him, Hegel finds Reason to be the sole reality of the universe. He conceives Reason as the Spirit or the Absolute Self and the world as such as its objectification, *i.e.* an actualisation of Reason. As he says in his *Philosophy of History*, "That this 'Idea' or 'Reason' is the True, the *Eternal* and the absolutely *powerful* essence, that it reveals itself in the world, and that in the world nothing else is revealed but this and its honour and glory."<sup>1</sup> This suggests the idea that the nature of reality can be apprehended only if it is realised as a necessary Whole, *i.e.* as an organism which can

<sup>1</sup> *Lectures on Philosophy of History* (Translated by Sibree. Edn. London, 1890), p. 10.



be explained as the Whole and also in relation to each of its elements which together form a network of perfect necessity. In other words, the nature of reality is self-explained.

So, reality is the Whole. We see what this concept signifies, when we find reality to be a 'self-realised' Whole or as the 'Idea'. Hegel distinguishes 'Idea' from 'Notion'. By 'Notion' he means the concept—the abstract principle of reality—the form of it, while 'Idea' is the *realised concept*. In other words, the 'Idea' is the 'Notion' actualised, or realised in the concrete. It signifies, so to say, Reason in its fullfledged objectivity—the essence of the universe taken together with its complete realisation all at once. This is the Truth. For, as Hegel describes, "Truth is the correspondence of objectivity with the 'Notion' <sup>1</sup>." In his *Phenomenology of Spirit* he says, "Truth is the Whole" <sup>2</sup>. All this seems to define reality to be the Whole, the universe, which is the product of an absolute necessity, *i.e.*, the Whole in which the fundamental principles of reason are perfectly realised.

Logic gives us these fundamental principles. They are mainly three in number, and accordingly we have the logic of Being, the logic of Essence and the logic of Notion. Among them Being defines the bare appearance of reality and in this first appearance we are not cognisant of its nature and essence. We simply know that it is. Next comes the category of Essence—a reflection on the essence of the object presented, *i.e.*, a subjective view of its inner nature, and the last category is that of Notion <sup>3</sup> which gives us the complete realisation of the essence, the actualisation of the concept. These are the fundamental categories of reason and constitute, therefore, the form of reality. Reason objectifies itself in the form of concrete actuality according to these principles. Certainly we are not going to have a study of these categories in every detail of them. We refer to

<sup>1</sup> Wallace—*Logic of Hegel*, Translated from *The Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, Edn. Oxford, 1892, p. 352 (Hegel, p. 212-13).

<sup>2</sup> Translated by Ballie, Edn. 1931.

<sup>3</sup> Here 'Notion' is used in a different sense from the abstract concept of reality. We should note that Hegel is not perfectly consistent in his use of the terms 'Idea' and 'Notion'.



them only because the entire process of evolution for the objectification of reason takes place according to these forms. Reality appears in these forms not only in its metaphysical presentation but also in its empirical manifestation.

Now the category of Notion can convey to us the conception of the Whole as such. Notion signifies the complete realisation of the concept of reason. That is to say, it represents a realisation of the world as a necessary Whole. As this perfectly realised necessity, *i.e.*, as the Whole as such, reality is infinite and eternal. It is infinite because it has realised itself perfectly and has found itself to be the Whole and the sole reality. Nothing does exist beside to limit it and there is nothing which it cannot explain. According to Hegel, finitude means a state of existence where there is a gap between essence and existence, that is to say, where essence has not fully accomplished its existence. In the 'Idea', *i.e.*, the 'realised Notion' there is no such gap, for the essence has here completely realised itself as a perfect necessity and therefore it is infinite when understood as such. So we must say that reality when conceived as the Whole, is eternal as well. For the concept is there eternally realised, *i.e.*, reason exists as being completely manifested in every moment of reality, binding it as a perfect and necessary Whole and it is only due to our limited power of understanding that we cannot apprehend it at once in its completeness. Reality is not an incomplete idea or a mere abstract notion which is yet to be developed. On the contrary, it is the absolute, infinite, self-realised Whole, eternally existing as such. The Whole appears to be an ideal, which is not yet fully realised from the particular points of view, from which we cannot see the *necessity* (reason) of the entire scheme.

The relation between knowledge and reality should be considered now. Hegel, unlike Kant, finds no impassable gulf between reality and knowledge. 'Unknowable' is the term unknown to him. There is nothing in reality which is not amenable to experience. On the contrary, it appears that, reality, as Hegel thinks, evolves in order to express itself through knowledge. The different stages of the evolution of the Absolute are nothing but the different levels



of our appreciation of the nature of reality. To look into the principles of logic, which for Hegel constitute the form of the evolution of the concept of reality, they are none but the principles of the development of our knowledge. An interpretation like this, indeed, shows that Hegel's philosophy is a partial and insufficient account of the world as a Whole. But it seems to be the most plausible explanation of Hegel's outlook. Why this is so we will try to show.

Hegel describes reality as the Self or the Absolute Spirit. This conception of reality as the Self is an inference from the idea of the self-realisation of the concept of reason. The self-realisation of a concept means the actualisation of it—an objectification of the essence into existence. This self-realisation he explains as the self-consciousness of reality, for it suggests the explicit manifestation of what is latent in the concept taken in the abstract. With this comes the idea of self, for self-consciousness is possible only for a conscious being. Reality must be realised as the Absolute Self, for we must understand it as the *essence realised*. To state in Hegel's words: "Everything depends on grasping and expressing the ultimate truth not as Substance, but as Subject as well."<sup>1</sup> Once again he says: "Spirit alone is Reality. It is the inner being of the world that which essentially is and is *per se*; it assumes objective determinate form, and enters into relation with itself—it is externality (otherness) and exists for self; yet in this determination, and in its otherness, it is still one with itself and for itself at once."<sup>2</sup> Now, Reason, in order to realise itself as the real as such, must evolve determinate forms so as to find itself to be a self-determined Whole. These determinations it undergoes by necessity of the concept itself. The concept must assume these forms in order to be self-realised; for it must not remain an abstract idea and must realise every particular determination in the universe to follow from itself. So there is an evolution of the real. Reality evolves in order to realise itself, or, to be self-conscious, so to say.

<sup>1</sup> *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Edn. Ballie, 1931, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, Preface, p. 86.



I think, I should explain the nature of this evolution before I come to discuss its course. The process, in short, is one of self-mediation, *i.e.*, of self-realisation by way of self-transcendence, which is effected through negation and contradiction. The concept determines itself in one form and then when it finds this form to be insufficient as the expression of its nature, it contradicts this existence and transcends it by entering into a new form of existence. In this process it transcends the otherness of what appears as 'Other' to itself in a particular form of its manifestation, for it finds itself in the 'Other' as well. In the 'realised Whole' there is no contradiction as there is no 'Other' to the Whole as such. All the contradictions are transcended, since the different existents that seem to contradict one another are nothing but the several necessary determinations of the concept itself on the way to its self-realisation. The evolution of nature and of mind are thus necessitated by the nature of reality. In this way Hegel reasons out the several stages of evolution and the different determinate forms they assume in the course of their emergence. Reality which is "in itself" or is self-contained as a concept is coming to be "for itself" or fully exposed to itself in all its details through these determinations. This is what is called its self-consciousness. Now, as we have stated before, the concept of reality is eternally realised and it is only from any particular station of itself that its nature as a whole is yet to be grasped (*cf.* above). This is a point which, I think, can be better explained with reference to the conception of reality as a living organism. As we are not going into the details of Hegel's metaphysics it is not our concern to have a thorough examination of this idea of living organism. A rough idea about 'Organism' will do for us. An organism means a systematic Whole, in which the Whole necessarily implies the parts and the parts live and act only for the existence of the Whole. The Whole as such has no being apart from its parts in which and for which it lives, while the parts are no other than the "parts of the Whole". It seems that the conception of a system like this at once suggests activity. And Hegel's idea of reality as an organism is that of a living one, especially because of the fact that he





conceives reality to be eternally self-accomplished, yet as constantly realising itself in time. That is to say, to see it from the point of view of the Whole as such, *i.e.*, to have a metaphysical idea of the real, we find the concept of reason to be eternally realised, self-contained and self-conscious. But this should not be taken to mean that it is like a finished product, with which we have nothing more to do. Whenever we concentrate on one particular station of the real taken apart from the Whole as such, we find that it is not complete in itself, for the true significance of that station can be understood only with reference to the Whole, *i.e.*, by explaining it as a definite point of determination evolved out of the concept itself. The real as such presents itself at that particular level as an ideal which is yet to be realised and in which the perfection of that particular moment consists. With this end in view it evolves in time and assumes different forms in the different stages of its self-realisation. Therefore, though reality as such is eternal in itself, yet it involves an idea of time, as time is the essential factor of its self-evolution that takes place through the evolution of the finite life. The conception of time is therefore a true idea in reality, as the idea of the self-evolution of reality is impossible without it. As Hegel says: "Hence spirit necessarily appears in time and it appears in time so long as it does not annul time . . . . Time therefore appears as spirit's destiny and necessity where spirit is not yet complete with itself."<sup>1</sup> Moreover, "The life of the ever-present spirit is a circle of progressive embodiments which looked at in one aspect still exists beside each other, and only as looked from another point of view appears as past".<sup>2</sup> Now, according to Hegel, the self-realisation of Reason takes its course in and through the self-determination of the finite spirits. The evolution of Reality is mainly carried through the gradual development of the self-consciousness of the finite selves and the evolution of Nature is of secondary importance. The justification of his idea we will consider later. Reyburn of course

<sup>1</sup> *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 800.

<sup>2</sup> *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, p. 82.



suggests that the Absolute has a parallel manifestation in Nature as it has in mind. To quote Reyburn, "The known world for Hegel falls into two main divisions, viz., nature and mind. These are parts of one world known by a single apprehending consciousness, and therefore subject to the fundamental laws which make knowledge and an object intelligible. But nevertheless each realm has forms and laws of its own; each has a character which cannot be attributed to the other, and it works out the basal principles of intelligible objects in its own way . . . . The philosophy of nature is the account of the principles as they appear in the outward world; the philosophy of mind exposes them in the shapes which they take in conscious life; logic is the discussion of them by themselves without reference to their higher special embodiments."<sup>1</sup> Indeed, there are statements by Hegel himself that may be quoted in favour of such an interpretation, such as: "Nature and spirit are different manners of presenting its existence."<sup>2</sup> Yet Hegel seems to consider the finite spirits to be the main concern of the evolution, though, as we will see, his acceptance of this idea involves certain difficulties. As we have seen, Reason is the essence of the universe, i.e., reality as such. Now, Hegel defines Reason as thought conditioning itself with perfect freedom. This may be taken to mean (which seems to be the only plausible explanation of it) that Reason is the essence of thought, i.e., its true being, and its freedom means a realisation of itself in its true being to be the sole reality. The events and the objects of the universe at large are to be understood as the objectification of its own essence. And as thought in its highest freedom is Reason, Reason is the essence and the substance of reality, how, we have seen.

But from this Hegel makes an inference which makes us concentrate on the evolution of the conscious minds as the sole organ of the evolution of the Absolute. The world is an embodiment of Reason and the aim of the evolution is to realise the universe as a rational whole. Therefore, as

<sup>1</sup> Reyburn, *The Ethical Theory of Hegel*, Edn. Oxford, 1921, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Science of Logic*, Vol. 2 (Tr. Johnston & Struther, Edn. George Allen & Unwin, London, 1929), p. 466.



conscious rational beings we have the privilege of apprehending this evolution for the self-consciousness of reality in our consciousness. The self-realising movement, he says, becomes conscious of itself in the consciousness of the rational beings.<sup>1</sup> But Hegel takes a hurried step towards an inference, the justification of which I shall later consider, to conceive the rational beings to be the primary concern of the evolution of the world. As he says, "The destiny of the spiritual world, and—since this is the substantial world while the physical remains subordinate to it, or, in the language of speculation, has no truth as against the spiritual—the final cause of the World at large, we allege to be the *consciousness* of its own freedom on the part of the spirit, and *ipso facto*, the reality of that freedom".<sup>2</sup> Reality becomes self-conscious in and through the gradual development of the self-consciousness of the finite selves. The self-consciousness of the finite spirit begins with sense-knowledge and ends with philosophy, the perfect realisation of the nature of reality in which alone a self has a true knowledge of its own being and essence. A self can appreciate its experience in its true perspective only when it sees the experience in relation to the Whole. That is, it understands in what particular stage of the self-realisation of the Absolute the experience occurs, and this is a fact that determines the true significance of that experience. As the idea of reality is compared with that of an organism, no event in the universe, no experience, however poor, is insignificant. Every one of them has a value as the reflection of the self-realisation of Reason at a particular stage. In the Whole all of them remain. Of course, no single experience as such has a metaphysical value. Its reality and value consists in the degree of reality it reflects in itself, *i.e.*, the distance it covers in the way of the self-realisation of the Spirit. All experiences are the "moments" of reality and in the Whole—they remain, though "idealised".

<sup>1</sup> See *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 22 (Edited by Ballie, 1910).

<sup>2</sup> *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, p. 20.





Now we return to the question of the self-consciousness of the Spirit through the self-consciousness of the finite selves. This idea is corroborated by the fact, that in Hegel's logic the principles of Reason, according to which Reason actualises itself as objective, are the same as those of the development of knowledge. Hegel possibly attempts to cover the distance between knowledge and reality in this way. But in spite of its every attempt to solve the epistemological conflict, Hegel's philosophy makes the evolution of the universe flow in one particular direction. Of course this idea of evolution must be explained in this way, if the terms " Spirit " and " self-consciousness " are taken literally. If reality is spirit which is trying to be conscious of its own nature, then it is possible for it to embody this movement nowhere in the world except in the life of self-conscious beings. If thought in its freedom is the essence of the universe, thinking beings manifest reality more faithfully than does the material objects.

### *Section III*

However, the essence of the universe actualises itself according to the development of human self-consciousness. This evolution finds its perfection in the Absolute Idea—which is the object of absolute knowledge, *i.e.*, an appreciation of reality as the perfect living whole, eternally self-realised, yet realising itself constantly in time. Now, as we have said before, from a particular stage of the self-consciousness, the perfect realisation of the nature of Spirit appears to be an ideal to achieve. This implies at the same time a conscious endeavour by the agent for the realisation of the ideal, for the term " ideal " cannot be understood without reference to some one striving for it. Moreover, as Hegel says, freedom is the aim and essence of the Spirit,<sup>1</sup> *i.e.*, of reality as such. That is to say, the essence of Spirit consists in " Thought " which in its true being is none but Reason which is Thought as conditioned with perfect freedom. To

<sup>1</sup> *Phenomenology of Spirit.*



find Spirit to be free is to realise the world as a perfect manifestation of Reason. It is to realise the different levels of our experience and existence as the objective realisation of the concept of Reason, *i.e.*, to apprehend Reason to be the substance of the universe. The aim of the universe is to find itself to be a living rational Whole. Therefore, freedom is the essence and the aim of the universe and a constant endeavour for its realisation is going on in the life of conscious beings. All these only tend to explain the evolution of self-consciousness as the evolution of value. It is true that the question of value persists so long as reality is presented in the form of an ideal. That is, the concept of value has its scope only in the finite level of self-consciousness, *i.e.*, only so far as the perfection is not attained. The concept of time is also involved with the concept of value, for temporality is the characteristic of the evolution of self-consciousness so long as we are not in the state of appreciation of the eternal as it is. But the striking thing in Hegel is this, that, according to him, value has not only an empirical, but a metaphysical significance. It has been found that the Whole is what it is only with its "moments" of realisation. The Absolute cannot be understood without an implication of the evolution of self-consciousness of finite selves. It is only through the constant endeavour of finite beings to achieve the ideal that the essence of the universe manifests itself. Certainly in the self-realised Spirit there is nothing to be attained and so there is no value to be realised. But the absolute Idea necessarily implies the different stages of finite experience, so it cannot be conceived without the concept of value.

Now we come to discuss the progressive achievement of values in human life. To this end, The concept of Right. we must consider the concept of 'right', for freedom in human life manifests itself in the form of 'right'. Hegel conceives 'right' as freedom actualised within a limit.<sup>1</sup> But freedom in finite spirits means freedom of the will. As it is stated in the *Philosophy of Right*, "The basis of right is, in general, mind; its precise place

<sup>1</sup> *Philosophy of Right* (Tr. Knox, Edn. Oxford, 1945), p. 20.



and the point of origin is the will. The will is free, so that freedom is both the substance of right and its goal, while the system of right is the realm of freedom made actual, the world of mind brought forth out of itself like a second nature".<sup>1</sup> Will is reason (Thought) reflected in finite consciousness.<sup>2</sup> The process of self-consciousness of the universal Mind finds its way into human life only through will. As Hegel says, "The self-consciousness which purifies its object, content and aim, and raises them to this universality effects this as thinking getting its own way in the will".<sup>3</sup>

Hegel rightly expresses in the same statement that this is a point which explains the relation Will and Knowledge. between will and thinking so far as his philosophy is concerned. According to Hegel there is no fundamental distinction between pure reason and practical reason ultimately. For him, will is free, *i.e.*, truly in itself only by virtue of its universality which is effected by way of reflection. Will is free in so far as it is universal and in so far as it is able to free the impulses and instincts of human mind from the limitations of crudity and barbarity, and this is possible through reflection alone. This process of elevation to universality is an activity of thought. Hegel, therefore, rightly conceives that, "In so far as thinking and willing are still distinguished the opposite is rather the truth, and will is thinking reason resolving itself to finite".<sup>4</sup> Will is certainly finite in nature and cannot fully reflect reason. When will transcends the realm of finitude and comes into direct contact with the infinite, will is transformed. But so far as our finite level is concerned, will is our essence and freedom of Spirit is objectified through the freedom of will alone. The system of right embodies the actualised freedom of our will in its different stages of achievement. And we can very well understand this to be a system of values as well. The different stages of right suggest the different levels of our

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 26.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 20.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*



appreciation of the Ideal. These are indeed different grades of value. We will now proceed to discuss the development of freedom and of the concept of value. But before we do so, we must look into Hegel's definition of the concept of freedom.

Freedom, as we know, is the aim and the essence of reality. But this freedom is not an abstraction from everything, *i.e.*, a complete indetermination. By freedom Hegel understands self-determination, that is to say, not abstract universality which is free because it has no content to determine its aim and action. On the contrary, freedom is universality which realises itself in the particulars and objectifies itself in them. Freedom of this kind is what is called individuality, and it is only as individual that will or Reason is free. Spirit is free because it is the individual. It is, in other words, an absolute universal Reason which determines itself in the particular experiences and thereby becomes actual. Will, according to Hegel, combines the two moments—abstract or negative freedom (an abstraction from all particular determination) and particular acts. It is thus individual and free.<sup>1</sup> Will, in other words, is action, *i.e.*, the actualisation of the concept in the world of facts. Now, the true purpose of will is reason and universality, and will is free in so far as it is capable of realising this as actual in the universe, *i.e.*, in accordance with its ability to further the purpose of reality. With this we pass on to discuss the development of freedom in human life and so to a study of the concept of value as it is found in Hegel's philosophy.

The barest freedom of the human will expresses itself in the form of abstract right. The will is  
 Abstract Right.                      here conscious of itself as a self-identical entity, distinguishing itself from all others as external to it. But so far it is absolutely indeterminate and devoid of any content. The "person" (as the will knows itself to be in this stage of its freedom) appreciates its own freedom by distinguishing itself from everything else which is not free. It is only as a "person" self-identical,

<sup>1</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, pp. 21 and 23.



indeterminate self-conscious existent devoid of all determination even by an impulse or a desire, that the will here remains. The will now involves only an abstract right. Distinctive stages of freedom of the will have distinctive rights attached to them. The right of the will in the sphere of abstract freedom is extremely abstract in its nature. All the right that a will enjoys here is that of a "person", an embodiment of pure abstract indeterminate freedom. It expresses itself by the imperative—Be a person and respect personality alone. That is to say, the only regard a person has for others is that which he has for them as "persons". This may also be stated in the form of a negative command, "Do not infringe the personality of others and of yourself." But as we have seen, this personality signifies a will that wills nothing, for it has no content of which it is conscious, and so nothing with which to be active. Therefore, a "person" needs to realise his freedom only by distinguishing himself from others who are not "persons" and by subduing them as his possessions. This entails the notion of property. The first rhythm of human freedom manifests itself in the existence of man as the owner of property. It is of course an external idea of freedom, a consciousness of oneself and of one's freedom only by virtue of one's distinction from the 'other'. It is, in other words, dependent on things external to the 'person'. It is a life of external value, as the self realises itself only in contrast with the external and has no definition of itself without reference to that.

Now, the right of a man as a 'person' induces him to honour the right of other persons as well as owners of property. Men are related to each other only as such and this implies a recognition of a common will, however implicit. Contract defines the relation of 'persons' on the basis of transference of property which is based on the presupposition of the common will. But when a 'person' attempts to deny the common will and disobeys a contract, it is a case of crime. A 'person' thereby disregards the common will on which contract is found to rest. With this therefore arises the idea of punishment which recovers the universality of the will by the denial of the claim of the criminal to enjoy



the right of 'person' exclusively as his own. Thus the universality of the will affirms itself through a process of contradiction.

But the inherent demand of the will itself that expresses itself in the form of contradiction, at the same time asserts abstract right to be an insufficient expression of the freedom of the will. It asserts itself, in other words, as an actual will, aiming at giving a concrete expression of the concept so far as possible at this stage. The will seeks to have the universality to be actual to itself, making the universal its true content and object, and therefore, though particular in itself, wills the universal. So Hegel says, "Fundamentally this implies a demand for a will which, though particular and subjective, yet wills the universal as such. But this concept of morality is not simply something demanded; it has emerged in course of this movement itself."<sup>1</sup> In morality man is recognised not only as a 'person' but as a 'subject' as well. The will is no longer an indeterminate abstract will free only in an external manner. It is, on the contrary, self-reflective and finds in itself an implicit universality which it seeks to make actual in its being. The will is particular, because only the will of a single person is so far concerned. It is also subjective as it has no idea of giving its universality an expression in the objective world, and all that it seeks for, is to offer to itself a universal form. Yet, the will becomes a concrete entity and its consciousness of its own existence is not gathered from outside. It is achieved by way of self-reflection alone. Moreover, Hegel rightly contends that it is only with a will which is subjective that freedom becomes actual. The aim of the will is to realise itself as free. But this is impossible if it is not truly conscious of its own nature. It is not free unless the universality latent within it is realised to be its essence in spite of the external and relative nature of impulses and desires.

Hegel admits that his own moral philosophy is the same as that of Kant. It defines will as similarly formal and abstract, a will that 'wills nothing' and simply craves a

<sup>1</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, p. 73.



transformation of itself as a bare universal will. Morality implies duty as an obligation of the particular will to the principle of universality, (which represents its true being), but Hegel fails to give any concrete definition of duty which may induce the agent to realise his ideal through particular actions. He merely says that will must identify itself with the principle of universality. Hegel himself recognises this defect. 'The attempt to actualise the concept is what is known as 'action' in Hegel's philosophy. But actualisation is still a demand so far morality is concerned. For the will exists here as a single subjective will and the demand for universality only hangs upon it as an obligation, though never completely fulfilled in moral life. In other words, our moral life is a sphere of duty, and so the gulf between the ideal and the existent ever remains for it.

Morality asserts subjective freedom which expresses itself under three forms of existence. These are :—(a) the formal right of action, the right that the content of action as carried out in immediate existence shall be in principle mine, that thus the action shall be the purpose of the subjective will. (b) The particular aspect of the action is its inner content, because I am aware of its general inner character, and my awareness of this general character constitutes the worth of the action and the reason I think it good to do it, *i.e.*, my intention. Moreover, its content is my special aim, the aim of my particular individual existence—my welfare. (c) The content (which is something inward yet raised to its universality as to absolute objectivity) is the absolute end of the will—the Good—with the opposition in the sphere of reflection, of subjective universality, which is now wickedness and now conscience. I think we should consider the concept of goodness for a while. The good is the Idea as the unity of the concept of the will with the particular will. It is, as Hegel contends, "freedom realised, the absolute aim of the world"<sup>1</sup>. It is, to say so, the aim and object of a subjective will. A will in moral life is valuable in so far as it is good. Yet Hegel gives us no such idea of goodness that points the way to its realisation through a particular will or

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 86.



action. He gives us the idea of bare universality of the will that presents itself as an abstract 'Ought', and involves a notion of "duty for duty's sake"—a notion which as we know from Kant, is not practical, though it is logical. Moreover, the universality which is the object of a moral will is subjective in its nature and it is conscience when this subjective universality asserts itself to be the absolute decisive element of human actions. But in want of a concrete principle to determine the subjective will it may easily lead us to evil as it may lead us to good, and we may affirm the evil with as much certainty as we affirm the good. Hegel is aware of this abstractness and the hopeless subjectivity of this moral theory. But he rather makes an artificial distinction between morality and ethics instead of promising us an objective and determinate *moral* philosophy. Or, I should say, he really attempts to give us an idea of objective and concrete morality, but only distinguishes it as a concern of our ethical life, while by morality he understands only the sphere of subjective will. He says: "From this point of view, no immanent doctrine of duties is possible; of course, material may be brought in from outside and particular duties may be arrived accordingly, but if the definition of duty is taken to be this absence of contradiction, formal correspondence with itself—which is nothing but formal indeterminacy stabilised—then no transition is possible to the specification of particular duties, nor, if some such particular content for acting comes under consideration, is there any criterion in that principle for deciding whether it is or is not a duty. On the contrary, by this means, any wrong or immoral line of conduct may be justified."<sup>1</sup> So, let us come to see what Hegel conceives as the ethical life of a man.

"The ethical life is the concept of freedom developed into the existing world and the nature of self-consciousness."<sup>2</sup> The concept now actualises itself in the world of facts. In place of

*Ethical life.*

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, 90.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 105.



an abstract ideal like the *good*, we are now afforded the objective ethical order, which gives life to the substance of the will, i.e., to its freedom through subjectivity of an infinite form. Ethical life attempts to give a true life to the universality of the will by evolving the ethical orders like family and the State which objectify not only the freedom of a single will but of the will of 'all'. These institutions, as the embodiments of collective reason, call for obedience from every single will so far as it is a particular will standing apart from the universal. Since the unity of the particular will with the concept of will is effected in knowing, the distinction between the two moments is present in our consciousness. But it is present in such a manner that each of them considers itself to be the totality of the Idea and has that totality for its ground and content. The will gives itself specific determinations by the concept itself which give rise to the various ethical orders, independent of subjectivity as being evolved out of the concept itself. The subjective will has its right only as part of such orders and has no right against them. But this does not imply a limitation of the freedom of the will. For the individual will has its liberation in these rights and these rights appear as duty only to a will which is still subjective and is an insufficient expression of its true freedom. Virtue is the spontaneous action of the individual will in accordance with the concept. The ethical mind expresses itself under three forms—(a) Family—the immediate phase of ethical mind specifically characterised with love, mind's feeling of unity. Individuals are to be self-conscious in a family only as its members and not as independent persons. This unity, however, loses its substantiality as it fails to provide each of the self-conscious members with self-subsistence. And so, (b) Civil society comes into existence. A Civil society is an association of self-subsistent individuals brought into union by the reason of their various necessities, on the basis of a mutual contract and is effected through a legal system. It is, as we understand, an external form of association, which necessarily passes into the actual unity of (c) the State. The State is an objectification of the freedom, a form of unity which reason evolves out of itself by virtue of necessity.



The State is the highest achievement of our empirical life and the actuality of the ethical Idea. As Hegel defines it, "It is the ethical mind qua the substantial will manifest and revealed to itself, accomplishing what it knows and in so far as it knows it. The State exists immediately in custom, mediately in the individual self-consciousness, knowledge and activity, while self-consciousness in virtue of its sentiment towards the State finds in the State its essence and the end and the product of its activity."<sup>1</sup> As such the State is absolutely rational and the individual can have no right as against it. The only right a person enjoys in a State is that which is afforded to him as a member of the State. Any violation of a dictate of the State is a wrong against reason and is therefore punishable by law. Of course, Hegel does not give us the picture of an existing State. Here we are only concerned with the philosophical concept of the State—or the thought behind it. It gives us, in other words, the idea of the State as the embodiment of reason or freedom, which is the substance of the will realised in the actual. Only as such does the State hold an absolute authority over its members for it is the highest embodiment of reason in finite life, the perfect expression of empirical freedom. In the *Philosophy of Right* and in the *Philosophy of Religion* Hegel discusses this conception of the State as the highest object of our finite life, and in the *Philosophy of Right* he even describes the State as the "mortal God". It has thus a likeness to the idea of the Whole (though far deficient in perfection in comparison with the Whole), and so Hegel compares it with an organism. The existing States are but the imperfect approaches to this conception of the State.

The State is the "mortal God"—the highest expression of human freedom so far as his experiences are within the limits of finitude. But in spite of that, as we understand, it cannot take us to an appreciation of the truth as it is in itself. Reality as infinite is not yet presented to us as the constitutive principle of our experience. Hegel

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 155.



admits that, "No doubt, in all the previous stages, 'consciousness', 'self-consciousness', 'reason', 'Spirit' the Absolute has been implied as a limiting principle, at once substantiating and determining the boundaries of each stage, hence each stage had an Absolute of its own, the character of which was derived in each case from the peculiarity of the stage in question."<sup>1</sup> But none of these stages of experience is able by itself to convey to us the absolute truth. Therefore, an exclusive limitation of the mind within the boundaries of the State bears the possibility of disguising the true nature of the Absolute from us. So Reason seeks to present itself as the principle of human experience by virtue of its infinity. We now transcend the realm of will and the first step we take involves feeling and faith which has the Infinite for its object.

First comes the attempt to express the infinite in sensuous forms, *i.e.*, through images and paintings. Here we are not concerned with the Hegelian theory of beauty. Our only object is to find the value of art as the medium of truth. That is to say, we seek to know how far these images and paintings are able to convey to us the nature of reality. The theory of art for art's sake has no meaning for Hegel. On the contrary, he describes such a view to be the cause of the destruction of art. So he says, "It is art's function to reveal *truth* under the mode of art's sensuous or material configuration, to dispaly the reconciled antithesis previously described and by this means to prove that it possesses its final aim in itself, in this representation, in short, and self-revelation."<sup>2</sup>

The experience is here one of feeling. We appreciate a piece of art and thereby feel our mind to be in an immediate unity with the Infinite. Art is art so far as it is able to serve this purpose and all its worth is lost as soon as it fails in this. Hegel finds the decay of the Greek art and culture to be an instance of this failure.

<sup>1</sup> *The Phenomenology of Spirit* (Tr. Ballie, Edn. London, 1931).

<sup>2</sup> *Philosophy of Fine Art*, Vol. I (Tr. Osmaston, London, 1920).



The incarnation of the Divine in finite form begins with Art, which succeeds in expressing the Divine only in its outward form but cannot express the inner life of the Self. The essence of religion (or "revealed religion", as it is called) consists in the belief in the existence of the absolute conscious Self as the supreme reality of the universe. In the words of Hegel: "That Absolute Spirit has taken on the shape of self-consciousness inherently, and therefore also consciously to itself—this appears now as the belief of the world, the belief that spirit exists *in fact* as a definite self-consciousness, *i.e.*, as an actual human being; that spirit is an object for immediate experience; that the believing mind *sees, feels, and hears* this divinity. Taken thus it is not imagination, not a fancy; it is actual in the believer. Consciousness in that case does not set out from its own inner life, does not start from thought, and in itself combine the thought of God with existence; rather it sets out from the immediate present existence and recognises God in it." <sup>1</sup> This experience he describes as "revealed religion", as distinguished from the

Faith.

religion of art, for the Spirit reveals itself directly in such experience. In this form of experience, there is no imaginative representation through a medium as in the case of art. We have, on the contrary, an absolute belief in the immediate existence of a being, who is the supreme being in the world. It is, in other words, a realm of faith, and it is in this faith alone that the Divine, as it is conceived here is alive. Of course, religion cannot give us a perfect knowledge of reality. But as Hegel says, it takes us afar, as reality presents itself in religion as a self-conscious spiritual entity, even though our idea of the Spirit is not yet free from the empirical prejudices. We colour it with our sensuous imagination and form a pictorial idea of the Spirit. Hegel contends that the nature of God is perfectly disclosed to speculative knowledge alone. "That knowledge knows God to be thought, as pure Essence; and knows this thought as actual being and as a real existence, and existence as the negativity of itself, hence as Self, as an individual 'this' "

<sup>1</sup> *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 757-58.



and a universal self,"<sup>1</sup> This seems not to be completely true of the 'God' of Hegel's religious conception, for it is an object of faith that occurs to one before one's attainment of the absolute knowledge. Here arises a dispute, which we leave aside for the present.

However, it is certain that the complete knowledge of the Absolute is not achieved by religious faith. In spite of recognising reality to be spiritual, absolute and infinite, it has not the capacity to grasp the real as a living Whole—as an organism—as the *actualised* concept of reason, *i.e.*, as the Idea. A knowledge of this kind is obstructed by the feeling (faith being one of its specific forms) and by the imaginative fancy which makes us conceive it in a wrong way by assuming sensuous characteristics of it. Reality reveals itself in its fullness nowhere but in speculative knowledge. In philosophy, *i.e.*, in absolute knowledge reality is conceived as the Absolute Idea. It is, as Hegel thinks, "Being, imperishable Life, self-knowing truth, and the whole of truth."<sup>2</sup> It is the only object of philosophy. As the Whole it contains all the determinations it needs to take upon itself in the course of its self-realisation through self-mediation. The content of philosophy is the same as that of art and religion. But philosophy perceives it in a new light and its mode is purely speculative. It finds the Whole in its perfect necessity, every moment of which is determined by the concept itself by the necessity of its self-consciousness. As distinguished from the logical Notion, the Idea is the *concept realised*. It takes the form of reality together with its content—the essence of reality along with the entire process of the evolution for its self-realisation through the experience of finite spirits. Though none of the finite experiences taken by itself has an absolute status, yet each of them exists in the whole as its *idealised* moment. In other words, the Idea is an appreciation of the universe as Reason. As the metaphysical reality it is infinite and eternal, yet it involves the finite life together with its deficient experiences as the necessary moments of its progressive self-consciousness.

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 761.

<sup>2</sup> *Science of Logic*, Vol. 2, p. 466.





It is in the self-consciousness of the finite spirits that the self-consciousness of the Absolute is believed to be actual by Hegel.

#### *Section IV*

##### *Critical estimate. Hierarchy of Values*

However, it is not for me to discuss Hegel's theory of metaphysics. Still I refer to it because of the fact that his concept of value is expressed through his theory of reality. We have seen how the different realms of values evolve along with the self-evolution of the Absolute through finite experience.

Now, all that we need to do is to make an estimate of Hegel's theory of value. One thing that must now be clear to us is that in Hegel's philosophy value means self-realisation. To analyse the concept of self-realisation, by 'self' Hegel understands the Absolute Self as it seeks to realise itself to be actual in and through the self-realisation of the finite selves. The concept of value is directly involved in the self-realisation of the finite spirits. This is true, because, this concept is significant only in reference to an ideal which is to be realised because it has a value for the agent by the achievement of which he attains some perfection of his own. The essential factor in value, as it seems to me, is value-consciousness, that is to say, a consciousness that a certain object or state contains some conditions of perfection of the agent, that is, it is valuable to him. It is a consciousness that impels the agent to seek for a realisation of the same. Hence the idea of value is always presented in relation to an ideal. Now, self-realisation is presented as an ideal only at the finite level of experience. The Absolute is a self-realised concept. The Hegelian concept of value involves the idea of time, for all finite experiences must occur in time. This position implies a theory of degrees of value. For as we have seen, the self-consciousness proceeds through several stages, each of which varies from the other by the degree of its realisation. Certainly, the self is not presented in the same form at all the levels. The abstract and external concept of the self which is presented in the sphere of abstract right is not the



ideal of our moral experience, nor is the self that finds its perfection in the life of the State, is the same as that we seek to realise in absolute knowledge. The degree of value of a certain experience is thus determined by the manner of presentation of the self (to be realised) to itself (which is to be transcended through this realisation). Yet, it is the same self—the self of the realising agent discovering himself in new forms at every stage of the progress. The value of the finite self as presented at a certain stage is determined by the degree of universality or freedom it is able to make actual, and the agent achieves value in so far as he succeeds in realising the self. The degree of value is therefore equal to the degree of freedom actualised, *i.e.*, universality objectified in the life of the self. It follows from this that the self which is set as an ideal before such a stage of experience necessarily evolves out of the concept of reason itself. It is, to be precise, determined by the Absolute as such. That is to say, the self which seeks to realise itself and that which is presented as the ideal are nothing but reality itself reflected in a certain context of experience in a certain particular form as determined by the peculiarity of the stage in question. A particular stage of experience is, in other words, a particular stage of the self-realisation of the Spirit itself, a process which becomes actual in the life of the spirits alone, and so the Absolute needs to present itself differently to the different levels of our experience, in accordance with the degree of its realisation of itself. Therefore, value is a phenomenon that arises in connection with the self-realisation of the Absolute Self through the realisation of finite selves themselves, the degree of which being determined by reality itself.

The concept of value is thus found to have a metaphysical status. But what is meant by 'realisation'? Hegel describes self-realisation as self-consciousness. From the point of view of finite beings we can apprehend the fact. It means the consciousness of the self in question of the true being of its own, which, as we know from our previous discussion, is possible by the knowledge of reality alone. But Hegel does not understand consciousness to be merely



a cognitive fact, or as a psychological state as it is ordinarily taken to be. By 'consciousness' Hegel means the actualisation of the essence of the self. This is so, possibly because of the fact that for Hegel a self can be truly conscious of its own nature, only when the various elements of its nature are fully exposed to itself. Freedom which is the essence of a spiritual existence can be exposed to it only when it is objectified as the true constituent of the world as such and is thus revealed in its perfection to a spirit. Self-consciousness means, therefore, a consciousness of the self of its own freedom, that is to say, perfect freedom of the self. Now, a self is free in the true sense of the term when the objects of its experience do not limit it, but are found to be the objectification of what constitutes the essence of its own. But such a freedom is possible for none but the Absolute Self, for there is nothing in the universe which is not determined by the concept of reality. It may be repeated at this moment that, reality is Reason itself and all the elements of the world are the manifestations of it. And so, it comes to this, that, the degree of self-consciousness of a particular self at a certain level of experience is determined by Reason, which again means no other than this, that the degree of value is proportionate to the degree of the realisation of the universe as a necessary or a rational whole, i.e., as a self-realised concept of Reason, as freedom actualised. In the different levels of experience the ideal presents this truth in various degrees. We have already seen how the idea of freedom gradually manifests itself through the evolution of our self-consciousness and how it reaches its perfection in the Absolute Idea. Reality determines values, but once it is realised in its completeness, we find it in its perfection all at once. The ideal vanishes into the Real and the question of the endeavour for values vanishes therewith. But so long it is not realised reality presents itself as the ideal, as a realm of value, i.e., as a state in the attainment of which consists the perfection of the self which is still not perfect.

With this I have finished the discussion of Hegel's idea of value. But some difficulties about his conception of value yet remain to be considered.



One thing that strikes us is that Hegel attaches to the conscious beings a greater importance than to Nature. According to him, the evolution of the universe takes its course primarily through the self-development of the finite consciousness, while the evolution of matter occupies a secondary place and acts merely as an aid to the primary course. This position has its justification in the description of reality as the Spirit and the evolution being caused by its necessity of self-consciousness or freedom as we know. But the Spirit is Reason and the world of events is an objectification of the concept of reason. All this we have previously discussed.<sup>1</sup> The self-consciousness of the Spirit, as we understand, is nothing but the realisation of Reason to be the essence and aim of the universe. It is, in other words, a realisation of the universe as a rational whole, a system of perfect necessity. It may be said that Hegel conceives the principles of the evolution to be the same as the principles of our knowledge and so he needs to conceive the Absolute to evolve only through the evolution of finite consciousness. But I do not think that Hegel himself would agree to this explanation. For, the principles of logic are the principles of Reason itself, which we use in our understanding only to make our judgments objective, *i.e.*, universal and necessary. The interpretation that Reyburn<sup>2</sup> puts on the theory of Hegel seems to meet the point raised above. But this explanation has not done justice to Hegel. For, instead of solving the problem, it takes us to a dualism which is incapable of explaining the absolutism of Hegel. Reyburn explains the physical evolution and the evolution of consciousness as two separate lines of realising the purpose of reality, each realising the purpose in its own way without reference to the other. But does it not give rise to the same difficulty that arises in connection with the theory of Spinoza? Where is the point of union between matter and mind, and how does an explanation like this make for the absolute monism which is the essence of Hegel's philosophy?

<sup>1</sup> See *Hegel's Lectures on Philosophy of History*, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> *The Ethical Theory of Hegel*.



Our discussion will, however, remain incomplete without reference to the objection McTaggart raises against Hegel's theory of the individual selves. According to Hegel, the self-conscious spirits or the selves are the medium of the evolution of the Absolute. Now McTaggart says, "The self answers to the description of the fundamental differentiations of the Absolute. Nothing else which we know or can imagine does so. The idea of the self has certain characteristics which can be explained if the self is taken as one of the fundamental differentiations, but of which no explanation has been offered on any other theory, except that of rejecting the idea of the self altogether and sinking into complete scepticism".<sup>1</sup> But he also finds that Hegel does not attach much importance to the role played by the finite selves, though as a matter of fact, reality as Spirit must evolve through spirit alone. That is to say, as McTaggart thinks, reality must evolve through persons.<sup>2</sup> McTaggart considers that the definition of the finite selves as the fundamental differentiations of the Absolute must logically imply their immortality. But Hegel does not seem to have any real interest in this implication, and he, in fact, leaves the question aside, though he sometimes mentions the selves to be immortal.<sup>3</sup> But McTaggart considers it to be a serious defect in any philosophy to fail to develop its implications. It is certain that the Absolute, as Hegel portrays it, cannot change. The Absolute has two moments in itself, neither of which is liable to change. The element of pure thought is obviously an unchangeable element, and the element of immediacy is so intimately knit together with the element of pure thought that no one of them can exist or change without implying an existence or change of the other. All changes are therefore apparent. The Absolute is changeless, and so also are the manifestations. As McTaggart puts it, "The content of each, as we learn from the dialectic, is simply a reproduction of the content of the Whole. It will be impossible for any individual self to suffer any

<sup>1</sup> *Studies in Hegelian Cosmology*, Ch. II, p. 26. (Cambridge University Press, 1901).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 5-6.

<sup>3</sup> *Hegel's Philosophy of Religion*.



change, unless the Absolute itself likewise changes".<sup>1</sup> Nor can we count the selves to be perishable. The Absolute is the continuous Whole. "And this necessary continuity in the Absolute, involving a similar continuity in the manifestation, will, therefore, forbid us to suppose that any of the selves who form the manifestation can ever perish."<sup>2</sup> It may be suggested that the chain of continuity maintains itself in the succeeding evolution of the selves. The place of one self is immediately taken by another. But with the differentiations of the Absolute the case is different. For, as McTaggart puts it, "It is the nature of the Absolute to be manifested in precisely those differentiation in which it is manifested, and so a breach in the continuity anywhere could not be compensated for by unbroken continuity elsewhere. The Absolute requires each self, not to make up a sum, or to maintain an average, but in respect of the self's special and unique character."<sup>3</sup> Now, McTaggart is right so far as he raises the point regarding the individual selves. But the conclusion he arrives at seems rather embarrassing. Does the idea of the immortality of the selves necessarily follow from the system of idealism Hegel develops?

The nature of the Absolute, as Hegel conceives it, may be described as Reason. The evolution of the Absolute is no other than the objectification of the concept of reason. The Absolute, we know, is a Whole—a necessary Whole, and so, the purpose of its self-evolution (if we are in any-way allowed to use the term 'purpose' here, for the evolution is not purposive as there can be no purpose in the Absolute as such), if it has any, is to bring out the necessity implied in each of its moments. I differ from McTaggart when he says that the Absolute being a Spirit must manifest itself in the selves or persons.<sup>4</sup> I have referred to this point before. Yet I think I should mention it here again. As Hegel states in the preface of his *Phenomenology of Mind*, "Everything depends on grasping and expressing the ultimate truth not as

<sup>1</sup> *Studies in Hegelian Cosmology*. p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 30.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 21.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 5-6.



substance but as subject as well ".<sup>1</sup> And he further explains his idea of Subject, as he says, " As Subject it is pure and simple negativity, and just on that account a process of splitting up what is simple and undifferentiated, a process of duplicating and setting factors in opposition, which (process) in turn is the negation of this indifferent diversity and of the opposition of factors it entails. True reality is merely this process of reinstating self-identity, of reflecting into its own self in and from its other, and is not an original and pure unity as such ".<sup>2</sup> The self-containedness of the substance, as he says, defines its spirituality, and we know what he means by it from the statement as given below. " It has to become self-contained *for itself*, on its own account; it must get knowledge of spirit and must be conscious of itself as spirit. This means, it must be presented to itself as an object, but at the same time straightway annul and transcend this objective form; it must be its own object in which it finds itself reflected ".<sup>3</sup> But if this is what he means by Spirit, it is not necessary that the persons, as self-conscious beings should be the only medium of its self-expression. For the universe as a whole, in each of its spheres, be it nature or self, is objectifying the necessity which the particular moment of existence represents in relation to the Whole as such as a system. Every element in the universe, therefore, is a manifestation of the Absolute, and each is unique in itself in its capacity to bring out its special significance. Yet, according to Hegel, the self-conscious spirits are the focus of the manifestation of the Absolute, primarily because the necessity of the Whole is truly reflected in the spirits. In them a self-conscious determination of the concept of reason inherent in the universe is possible. But the absolute importance attached to conscious beings does not seem to be a necessary implication of the conception of the Absolute as Reason. The Whole as such far surpasses us, and the world is governed by the necessity of the Whole, and

<sup>1</sup> *Phenomenology of Mind*, p. 15, Vol.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 16.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 22.



we in spite of our appreciation of the objects of nature are but some real moments in it, prolonging the continuity of the Whole along with others with our self-realising activity. Of course, the evolution of reason is reflected in us (finite selves) through a self-conscious determination of its own and herein lies its highest manifestation. We also agree with Hegel to say that, so far as the spiritual content is produced by its own certainty, it is only the thinkers who *know* Spirit to be for itself.<sup>1</sup> Yet, we have no reason to consider ourselves to be the only means of the self-realisation of the Self—as McTaggart finds it to be the case, if we stick to the Hegelian definition of spirituality as a capacity for self-mediation. The self-conscious determination of the concept of reason, which is the characteristic of our (of finite spirits) self-realisation, indeed, may occupy the most significant position in the process of evolution, but it is significant only in relation to the Whole. Our reason is but a particular manifestation of the absolute reason. Yet, Hegel is not perhaps satisfied with his own definition. He must have in his mind a quite different idea of 'spirit' when he comes to conceive of the finite selves to be the essential and the only medium of the manifestation of the Absolute. But this suggestion, as McTaggart finds, is of immense significance as regards the self-realisation of the finite selves. It is the medium through which the Absolute realises itself. In this sense, we may also suggest that, the process of our realisation of values has a validity even from the point of view of the Absolute, except in which it does not appear. And McTaggart rightly explains each of the selves as a unique centre of self-realisation of the Absolute. In a sense, indeed, the place of one cannot be taken by another. But does this imply the immortality of the selves? McTaggart saves the eternity and continuity of the Absolute with a conception of the immortality of the finite selves. But this seems to involve a lot of trouble. In the first place, to conceive the Absolute as continuous through the immortality of the finite selves, necessarily imports time into the *timeless* reality. For the finite spirits, we have been told, exist and realise

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*



themselves only in time. Again, in the second place, we have no idea how a soul continues to follow its mission even after its end in time. We may try to defend the position with reference to the Indian conception of rebirth, but that would illogically take as far, at least when Hegel himself is absolutely silent on the matter.

However, it seems that the problem can be solved even without the suggestion of immortality. We can best understand the nature of the Absolute and its self-realisation if we conceive the Absolute as the perfect comprehensive Whole or the Individual. The evolution of the universe is none but the process of the self-realisation of the Absolute, otherwise definable as the evolution of the concept of reason objectively determining itself in every sphere of life, finding each to serve a unique purpose of the Whole. Every individual life possesses a unique value as it brings out the meaning the Whole seeks to realise in it. Each of our lives is significant as a peculiar manifestation of the Absolute, *i.e.*, as a true determination of the concept of reason as focussed in that particular centre of existence. And when one ceases as this or that individual, the character of the Whole one has objectified in one's life is not lost. The comprehensiveness one has so far realised through the revelation of a unique character of the Whole continues to exist as the ground of a further progress in this direction. We seek to have a progressive determination of the Whole by taking our stand on the realisation of it so far achieved. And this brings out the true sense of the Hegelian conception of history as an objectification of reason. It was possibly some such idea that leads the Neo-Hegelians to conceive the values as the eternal achievements of the universe.



## CHAPTER V

### THE CONCEPT OF VALUE IN GREEN'S PHILOSOPHY

#### *Section I*

Bosanquet is said to be the pioneer in so far as the idealist theory of value is concerned. He is indeed the first among the Neo-Hegelians to develop an explicit concept of value, though this concept is, in fact, developed on the basis of the Hegelian theory of absolute idealism. There are, however, some points in Green's philosophy, which seem to suggest a theory of value. By his recognition of the absolute reality of the *person*, he affords the idea of value a real place in the universe, and in this sense he indeed makes an improvement upon Hegel.

Green is often described as a Neo-Kantian. In fact, he is found to oscillate between the position of Kant and that of Hegel. But he is also influenced by Spinoza. Consciously or unconsciously, he goes along with Spinoza when he conceives the self-realisation of the person to be the only motive behind his acts, from sensuous desires to the highest metaphysical speculation. Green so far as I understand him, is a Kantian, and strives to cure the Kantian theory of its dualism and formality with the help of ideas borrowed from Spinoza and Hegel.

#### *Section II*

Now, before we come to the details of Green's philosophy, let us consider if a theory of personal idealism has possibility as a theory of value. We have seen that an ideal is truly significant in human life and calls for the most sincere effort for its realisation when it presents itself as that in which a person may find the highest satisfaction of his own. A value—economic, moral, intellectual, or even spiritual is nothing to a person unless it means a sort of perfection of the person himself in idea or in practice.





The ideal must be such as every one of us will tend to realise it for his own sake. To be concrete and actual, it must present itself as personal. And this it must do even if its content is universal in its nature. Green defines his theory as a theory of personal idealism, and finds no good to be good except as a good to some person. And this is a fact that makes us consider his philosophy as a philosophy of value.

### Section III

But how does he conceive of the *person*? Green's idea of the *person* is ultimately based on the conception of the transcendental unity of apperception, which Kant takes to be the fundamental presupposition of human knowledge. Green seeks to see, as he says: "Whether the same principle has not another expression than that which appears in the determination of experience and through it in our knowledge of a world—an expression which consists in the consciousness of a moral ideal and the determination of human action thereby."<sup>1</sup> But Green does not accept the Kantian conception as it is. He determines it in his own way and deduces from it some conclusions that are relevant not only to the phenomenal level of existence. As he says, "Can the knowledge of nature be itself a part or product of nature?"<sup>2</sup> Green finds it to be a fact that knowledge is essentially of relations. Even a mere *fact* as we know it in its immediate existence, presupposes several relations between our consciousness and objects, and the nature of the *fact* is determined by these relations. The phrase as *known* may suggest a phenomenalism. But Green puts an end to the Kantian agnosticism by saying that a thing unknown and unknowable means nothing for us. We are concerned with facts and objects as they are known. However severely we remove from our experience all determinations by knowledge-relation, it is never completely independent of its

<sup>1</sup> *Prolegomena to Ethics*, Introductory Chapter, p. 12 (Oxford, Fifth Edn., 1906).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, Bk. I, Ch. I, p. 13.



relation to our experience. We may observe in this contention an implication of the Hegelian theory that finds experience to be the essence of Reality, and the self-evolution of the Absolute to be effected with the dialectical principles of knowledge, and thus covers the gulf that seems to be there between *Reality as such* and *Reality as known*. Moreover, though Green does not fully develop this point, he at least admits that we conscious beings, being the constituents of reality, cannot, with our best efforts, continue to present wrongly the nature of reality. Green's absolute regard for *persons* as the irreducible factors of the universe, for the sake of which, according to him, the world exists, is an idea akin to Hegel's conception of spirits as the primary factors in the evolution of world. And with this regard for *person* he cannot conceive our knowledge of reality to be illusion.

Now, "Matter and motion," as he says, "just so far as known, consists in, or are determined by, relations between the objects of that connected consciousness which we call **experience**".<sup>1</sup> But relations cannot stand by themselves, nor are they conceivable through something which is itself related, a fact which he thinks, would lead us to an infinite series of relations. An object may enter into a plurality of relations, and a plurality of objects have one relation among them. But neither a plurality of objects can enter into a relation by themselves, nor can an object by itself have a number of relations. Therefore, Green concludes that relations necessarily presuppose a conscious principle of unity that renders the relations possible, yet distinguishes itself from all of them and remains constant in spite of our changing experiences. He says, "If nothing can enter into knowledge that is unrelated to consciousness; if relation to a subject is necessary to make an object, so that an object which no consciousness presented to itself would not be an object at all; it is as difficult to see how the principle of unity, through which the phenomena become the connected system called the world of experience can be found elsewhere than in consciousness, as it is to see how the consciousness exercising such a function can be

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*





a part of the world which it thus at least co-operates in making; how it can be a phenomenon among the phenomena which it unites into knowledge."<sup>1</sup> But this should not result in a subjectivism. For Green there is a fundamental distinction between objective reality and unreal fancy. Both of them involve relation. But the relations that constitute the two are not of the same kind. The objectively real phenomena exist by virtue of a system of relations which are unalterable and independent of our perception. It presupposes an eternal principle of consciousness.

Green seeks to overcome the Kantian dualism—the idea of two worlds of noumena and phenomena, unrelated and incommunicable to each other by deducing both knowledge and its object from the same source. He says: "The true account of it is held to be that the concrete whole which may be described indifferently as an eternal intelligence realised in the related facts of the world, or as a system of related facts rendered possible by such an intelligence, partially and gradually reproduces itself in us, communicating piecemeal, but in inseparable correlation, understanding and the facts understood, experience and the experienced world."<sup>2</sup> We are capable of knowledge by virtue of the self-communication of the eternal self-distinguishing principle in us. For he thinks, that, if we were merely phenomena among phenomena we could not have knowledge of a world of phenomena. In order to have a knowledge of the relations, we must be something more than relations.

A true account of human nature is possible with the help of two conceptions. Man must have his animal nature to convey to him feelings and sensations, and on the other hand there must be a self-distinguishing consciousness in him, that forms a system of knowledge out of them. The two sides imply one another, and they are there with reference to each other. Knowledge is the result of their conjoined action. As Green puts it: "We have not two

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 41.



minds, but one mind; but we can know that one mind in its reality by taking account, on the one hand, of the process in time by which effects of sentient experience are accumulated in the organism, yielding new modes of reaction upon stimulus and fresh association of feeling with feeling; on the other, of the system of thought and knowledge which realises and reproduces itself in the individual through that process, a system into the inner constitution of which no relations of time enter."<sup>1</sup> We have seen that in order to avoid the Kantian dualism Green deduces the understanding and the facts understood from the same source. That is, he considers the world to be the result of the activity of a spiritual principle that holds together the relations and the facts related, which in their barest immediacy involve a relation to consciousness.

Balfour<sup>2</sup> attacks Green for ascribing a creative power to the principle which Kant considers to be valid only as an assumption of phenomenal knowledge. But the objection does not stand. For Green is conscious of the fact, "That the unifying principle should distinguish itself from the manifold which it unifies, is indeed the condition of the unification."<sup>3</sup> "But," he continues, "It must not be supposed that the manifold has a nature of its own apart from the unifying principle, or the principle another nature of its own apart from what it does in relation to the manifold world. Apart from the unifying principle the manifold world would be nothing at all, and in its self-distinction from the world the unifying principle takes its character from it; or rather, it is in distinguishing itself from the world that it gives itself its character which therefore but for the world it would not have."<sup>4</sup> Every system has a principle according to which its different elements are united. The *whole* itself is the source of the facts and also of the relations they hold between them, both of which involve each other for the sake of the *whole*. They together

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, Bk. 1, ch. II, p. 79.

<sup>2</sup> Balfour's article—*Green's Metaphysics of Knowledge, Mind.*, 1884, January.

<sup>3</sup> *Prolegomena*, Bk. 1, Ch. III, p. 86.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 86-87.





constitute Reality as such, which is often described<sup>1</sup> as a "concrete whole", indifferently termed as "an eternal intelligence realised in the related facts of the world", or, as "a system of related facts rendered possible by such an intelligence". This *whole* is spiritual on account of its self-distinguishing character to which everything appears to be relative. But Green is careful in his statement against all sorts of supernaturalism, for he says, "We suggest a relation between it (the self-distinguishing principle) and nature of a kind which has really no place except *within* nature, as a relation of phenomenon to phenomenon".<sup>2</sup> And we have seen that for Green there is no noumenal existence foreign to the world we know.

#### Section IV

However, we are not concerned with Green's theory of knowledge. We still consider it because Green's theory of moral value rests on his theory of knowledge.

Green sets himself the task of enquiring whether the principle of unity inherent in our knowledge has not another expression in the sphere of our moral life, and arrives at an affirmative conclusion. The wants and impulses of human mind are products of the animal nature. Now, as he says: "These wants, with the sequent impulses must be distinguished from the consciousness of wanted objects, and from the effort to give reality to the objects thus present in consciousness as wanted, no less than sensations of sight and hearing have to be distinguished from the consciousness of objects to which these sensations are conceived to be related. It has been sufficiently pointed out how the presentation of sensible things, on occasion of sensation, implies the action of a principle which is not, like sensation, in time, or an event or a series of events, but must equally be present to, and distinguish itself from, the several stages of a sensation to which attention is given, as well as the several sensations attended to and referred to a single object. In like manner

<sup>1</sup> *Prolegomena*, Bk. I. Ch. I, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> *Op cit.*, p. 61.



the transition from mere want to consciousness of a wanted object, from the impulse to satisfy a want to an effort for realisation of the idea of the wanted object, implies the presence of the want to a subject which distinguishes itself from it and is constant throughout successive stages of the want".<sup>1</sup> Therefore, our moral life, *i.e.*, the life of practice too explains human nature with two conceptions, *viz.*, the animal nature of wants and impulses and the self-distinguishing principle of unity. As we now see, this self-distinguishing principle of consciousness is a mode of the eternal consciousness. As he says: "But just as this latter history, (history of human intelligence) though to call it a history of an eternal consciousness would be a contradiction, has yet taken its distinctive nature, as a history of *intelligence*, from a certain action of an eternal self-distinguishing consciousness upon the process of feeling; so the history of human character has been one in which the same consciousness has throughout been operative upon wants of animal origin, giving rise through its action upon them to the specific quality of that history".<sup>2</sup> "Through certain *media*, and under certain consequent limitations, but with the constant characteristic of self-consciousness and self-objectification, the one divine mind reproduces itself in the human soul".<sup>3</sup> We are 'persons' by virtue of the presence of this principle of self-consciousness or self-objectification in our nature. And our personality becomes an object of immense and absolute value as it is inherited directly from the eternal principle of consciousness. Moreover, we are conscious of the eternal principle only through our own self-consciousness. As Green puts it, "The divine principle which we suppose to be realising itself in man, should be supposed to realise itself in persons as such. But for reflection on our personality, on our consciousness of ourselves as objects to ourselves, we could never dream of there being such a self-realising principle at all, whether as implied in the world or in ourselves. It is only because we are consciously objects to

<sup>1</sup> *Prolegomena*, Bk. II, Ch. I. pp. 97-98.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 107.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, Bk. III, Ch. II, p. 206.





ourselves, that we can conceive the world as an object to a single mind, and thus as a connected whole".<sup>1</sup> According to Green, it is the irreducibility of this self-objectifying principle to anything else as effect of an antecedent condition that compels us to regard its presence as the presence in the mind of the principle for which the world exists.<sup>2</sup>

Green tries to transcend the illegitimate abstraction between intellect and morality by reducing both the intellectual and the practical attitude of man to follow from the same principle of self-objectification or self-consciousness, as he says. But there is a fundamental distinction between the two. The world we cognise through intellect is already there as an unalterable system of relations, while in the life of practice our object is not to know but to achieve something. It may be said that the object we desire exists prior to our desire and achievement. But in moral life, *i.e.*, in the life of practice, we do not aspire after an object as it exists by itself. The total object of one's desire is oneself in a state of enjoying the object and in this manner the object exists nowhere in the world before one actually achieves it. It exists only in the idea of the agent and becomes true after it is realised by him.

From this follows the conclusion that in moral life we always act with the idea of an end. Green defines motive as "an idea of an end, which a self-conscious subject presents to itself, and which it strives and tends to realise".<sup>3</sup> So, it is that, according to Green, all moral acts are motivated. Our several wants and appetites often constitute the motives, but only when a self-conscious principle supervenes upon them. As Green thinks: "It only becomes a motive, so far as upon the want there supervenes the presentation of the want by a self-conscious subject to himself, and with it the idea of a self-satisfaction to be attained in the feeling of that want".<sup>4</sup> And Green obviously deduces from this the conclusion that the ultimate motive of

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 208.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Prolegomena*, Bk. II, Ch. I, p. 100.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 101.



all actions is the idea of some personal good of the agent himself. As he says, "Anything conceived as good in such a way that the agent acts for the sake of it, must be conceived as *his own* good, though he may conceive it as his own good only on account of his interest in others, and in spite of any amount of suffering on his own part incident to its attainment".<sup>1</sup> The person being a mode of the divine principle possesses several capabilities, and his good consists in the realisation of them. As these capabilities are not actually realised in any life on earth, we have no adequate idea of their nature. But the essence of man's spiritual endowment is the consciousness of having them, and thus the idea of his having such capabilities, and of a better state of himself which consists in their further realisation, constitute the moving principle behind all human actions. It has been the parent of our social judgments, aspirations and usages and of whatever progress we have so far made. So, in spite of the inadequacy of our knowledge of the nature of these capabilities, we have an idea of them through our practice. The progressive move of humanity in its various spheres brings out to a certain extent the essence that seeks an expression in it. Green is so much impressed by this idea of personal good that he finds the ultimate standard of all values in human life to be personal in its nature. He believes in no progress of humanity in the abstract, not even in a national achievement, unless it is a progress of, or to one's personal character.

It may be observed here that Green conceives the personal good not as the good of the aspiring agent alone but of all human personalities. An explanation like this follows from Green's idea of the true good to a person to be found in a society of persons, each recognised by others as an end to himself. I shall consider this point later. But it is certain that Green conceives the ultimate principle of all actions to be personal in its nature. He admits that, "Human society presupposes persons in capacity—subjects capable each of conceiving himself and the bettering of his life as an end

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 104.



to himself",<sup>1</sup> though, he adds, "It is only in the intercourse of men, each recognised by each as an end, not merely a means, and thus as having reciprocal claims, that the capacity is actualised and that we really live as persons".<sup>2</sup>

Green identifies this ultimate principle of our moral functions with practical reason or will, which, as he defines it, is the person himself in a particular mode of his self-realisation.

He finds this motive for self-realisation, termed as will or practical reason, to condition our intellectual effort as well as our moral acts. For, even in knowledge, we seek for a satisfaction of our person so far as our intellect is concerned. Intellect and desire (the endeavour to bring the object in idea into existence, which is the characteristic of a moral act) involve each other, and both are present, however implicitly, in our intellectual as well as in our moral endeavours. Desire is a factor in our intellectual efforts, as our intellect seeks to reduce something unknown to known, while all moral efforts involve an element of intellect being preceded by the idea of its object of desire.<sup>3</sup> Green considers them to be the two-fold expressions of the same act of self-realisation, and thus looks for a transcendence of the illegitimate separation between the different functions of human nature as he conceives morality and intellect to be the expressions of a single unitary self.

Now we see that Green conceives the self-realisation of the person to be the principle as well as the standard of all values. As he says, "Our ultimate standard of worth is an ideal of *personal* worth".<sup>4</sup> And he adds, "all other values are relative to value for, of, or in a person".<sup>5</sup> Whether in moral life, or in a life of intellect, we act with the idea of some perfection of our own self. The idea of some good to his person is involved in every effort of a human being. Now, the presence of a motive or the idea of an end (which

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, Bk. III, Ch. II, p. 210.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Prolegomena*, Bk. II, Ch. II.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, Bk. III, Ch. II, p. 210.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*



end is always his own person) in all our actions, characterises our actions as efforts for the realisation of value. Self-realisation of the person presents itself as the underlying ideal, and calls for endeavours to attain it. That is to say, it presents itself as what is most valuable to us, for the sake of which we must act. We have seen at the very outset of this discussion that an object is of value to us when we conceive ourselves to be realised in it. In order to be valuable, it must be valuable to some one, for we do not pursue an ideal which means nothing to us. Certainly, it may be the case that the ideal does not always conform to the idea of a personal satisfaction in a crude or the most 'worldly' sense of the term. But that somehow it satisfies the idea of the perfection of the agent himself is indubitable. So, Green seems to be right in describing the 'person' as the ultimate end of all acts, the highest criterion of value. The presence of the element of desire in every action of ours further emphasises this point, by the suggestion of bringing the ideal object into existence in relation to the desiring person, and what we thus seek to make our own must be conceived to bring some good to our person. Certainly we do not think that Green conceives each of the efforts of a man to follow from a conscious presentation of his own perfection as the ideal in any way. All that he seems to suggest is that, the inherent motive of our endeavours, whatever it is, is no other than the good of a person.

### *Section V*

But what is meant by the self-realisation of the person? Is it a satisfaction of the unique character of the individual consisting of his peculiar desires, feelings and thoughts? Or, does it merely imply a realisation of the principle of self-consciousness which, according to Green, constitutes the essence of our personality? Sidgwick criticises Green for taking an abstract conception of personality, which, as he thinks, fails to serve a moral purpose. Our principle of self-consciousness is derived from the eternal self-distinguishing principle of consciousness, which has no value except as the necessary assumption of knowledge. As Sidgwick says,



"Such a notion of eternal intellect cannot carry with it any notion of progress towards any end in the series of motives or changes of which the progress of the world of time consists. And if it indicates any progress in us—a development of the eternal consciousness in us—it is merely one of knowledge".<sup>1</sup> Now, the objection is not absolutely without a ground. Indeed, there are certain statements in Green, that imply such a definition of our moral progress as Sidgwick refers to in his criticism. It is stated in the *Prolegomena to Ethics* that, "If we mean anything else by it (personality) than the quality in a subject of being consciously an object to itself, we are not justified in saying that it necessarily belongs to God and to any being in whom God in any measure reproduces or realises himself".<sup>2</sup> But Green, I think, has no intention to present the ideal moral life as a state of blank featureless unity. He has always in his view the idea of a concrete moral life, though the inconsistency of his thought and language often leads us to interpret him otherwise. Green never conceives the divine principle to be present in a man except through the feelings, thoughts and desires that belong to a particular person. Certainly, the principle of self-consciousness is the essential characteristic of all who are *persons*. But he thinks that, "Just as we hold that our desires, feelings and thoughts would not be what they are—would not be those of a man—if not related to a subject which distinguishes itself from each and all of them; so we hold that this subject would not be what it is, if it were not related to the particular feelings, desires and thoughts, which it thus distinguishes from and presents to itself".<sup>3</sup> Therefore, we must say, that a person seeks his self-realisation with reference to the particular feelings and desires, and the ideal perfection that a particular person desires for himself is in a certain sense unique to himself. According to Green, "the self of which a man thus forecasts the fulfilment, is not an abstract or empty self. It is a self already affected in the most primitive forms of human life by

<sup>1</sup> Sidgwick's article—*Green's Ethics*, *Mind*, April, 1884, p. 172.

<sup>2</sup> *Prolegomena*, Bk. III, Ch. II, p. 208.

<sup>3</sup> *Prolegomena*, Bk. II, Ch. I, p. 112.



manifold interests''<sup>1</sup>. So, we must take account of these various interests in order to satisfy the self. By a moral ideal, which must satisfy a moral agent, Green means, as he says, "Some type of man or character or personal activity, considered as an end in himself"<sup>2</sup>. It is true that in order to conceive personality as valuable by itself we must take a man by himself, *i.e.*, by his character. And though the person, in fact, longs for a variety of external and internal objects, what is desired through all of them is a state of contentment of the person as such. Of course, Green finds happiness to follow from one's contentment with the objects of his desire. But it is not in the objects themselves, but in a state of satisfaction of the agent that happiness consists. As Green conceives, "A character is only formed through a man's conscious presentation to himself of objects as his good, as that in which his self-satisfaction is to be found"<sup>3</sup>. That is to say, character is formed by the habitual self-seeking with a particular kind of desire. So the perfect moral ideal consists in the development of a habit of seeking ourselves to be satisfied with those, which would bring in a state of true satisfaction to the person. A will defines the person as he is in a state of desiring a particular object, and it follows that a character must express itself in will. The only unconditional good for man is, therefore, good will. Green admits this when he says, "If, on being asked for an account of the unconditional good, we answer either that it is the good will or that to which the good will is directed, we are naturally asked further, what then is the good will? And if in answer to this question we can only say that it is the will for the unconditional good, we are no less naturally charged with 'moving in a circle.'"<sup>4</sup> But if the moral ideal is to be based on the idea of a man as an end in himself, he conceives this circle to be inevitable. As one's personality is of the only unconditional value to oneself, in order to be unconditionally good one's will must ultimately

<sup>1</sup> *Prolegomena*, Bk. III, Ch. II.

<sup>2</sup> *Prolegomena*, Bk. III, Ch. II, p. 224.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 223.



refer to one's person. And Green considers good will to be the measure of all moral judgments, regarding the motive as well as the result of our actions.<sup>1</sup>

Thus Green presents us with the Kantian conception of good will, which he deduces in his own way from his idea of personality. But he attempts to avoid the charge of formalism often brought against Kant. The person who is an end in himself has several interests and capabilities. The self-conscious principle known as the essence of the person is invariably associated with the particular feelings and desires, peculiar to a particular person. Moreover, as Green contends, "There cannot be this development (development of human personality) without a recognised power of appropriating material things. This appropriation must vary in its effects according to talent and opportunity, and from that variation again must result differences in the form which personality takes in different men"<sup>2</sup>. So good will must take a different form according to the nature of the person in question. It must develop itself as a concrete will being the expression of a unique character. But Green's conception of good will suffers certain inconsistency. It exposes itself to the charge of being essentially determined by external circumstances, though it is defined to be a moral will—as representing the man as such.

### Section VI

But what is the essential object of our interest? Our main concern is with our own person, and the object that contributes most to the development of our personality is most valuable to us. According to Green, nothing helps us more towards this end than other persons. So, the object that interests us in the most, is the personality of others, *i.e.*, a consideration of others as self-conscious beings who are ends to themselves. Green conceives the correspondence of one's expression of pleasure, pain with that of another to be the primary ground of one's interest in the personality of

<sup>1</sup> *Prolegomena*, Bk. IV, Ch. I, p. 348.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, Bk. III, Ch. II, p. 220.



another. As he says: "Having found his pleasures and pains dependent on the pleasures and pains of others, he must be able in the contemplation of a possible satisfaction of himself to include the satisfaction of those others, and that a satisfaction of them as ends to themselves and not as means to his pleasure"<sup>1</sup>. It is, however, difficult to see how the idea of the dependence of our pleasure-pain on those of others can lead us to consider them as ends to themselves. An idea like this suggests that our interest in others is alive so long as others help or hinder our own satisfaction. But it cannot bring in that absolute regard for the personality of others, a conception which Green thinks to be the essential basis of our social unity. However, Green finds, that the development of human personality as such is possible within a social context in which all persons are recognised as ends in themselves. The self, he thinks, has several interests, among which is the interest in other persons as ends in themselves<sup>2</sup>. What is the source of this interest? Green would obviously answer: "Granted the most entire devotion of a man to the attainment of objects contributory to human perfection, the very condition of his effectually promoting that end is that the objects in which he is actually interested, and upon which he really exercises himself, should be of a limited range..... It is the condition of social life, and social life is to personality what language is to thought. Language presupposes thought as a capacity, but in us the capacity of thought is only actualised in language. So human society presupposes persons in capacity—subjects capable each of conceiving himself and the bettering of his life as an end to himself but only in the intercourse of men, each recognised by each as an end, not merely as a means, and thus as having reciprocal claims, that the capacity is actualised and that we really live as persons."<sup>3</sup> As Green conceives, whatever moral capacity we possess, it is only actualised through the habits, institutions and laws in virtue

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, Ch. III, p. 231.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 229.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, Ch. II. pp. 209-10.



of which we belong to a nation. But the life of a nation has no existence except in the life of its self-conscious members. A national life is determined by the intercourse of the individuals with each other and it derives its peculiar characteristics from the conditions of that intercourse.<sup>1</sup> The laws, literature, habits and customs with reference to which we are to seek our own good, register, as he says, the progress that men have so far made as self-conscious persons, who are ends to themselves. Possibly Green has in mind the idea, that my personality receives a recognition by others and is provided with a scope for its realisation only on the ground of similar recognition by me of others as "persons". Moreover, he considers a human self to be essentially social in its nature. The instinct in ourselves as social beings has been the parent of institutions, customs and habits even in the most primitive stages of our civilisation. Therefore, one's self-realisation must take its course in and through society, in spite of the motive being ultimately personal in its nature. In this connection we may refer to Green's conception of reason and virtue and specially to his idea of *reason as the parent of law*. Will or practical reason, as the expression of the motive of self-realisation is the source of all human actions. But as Green says. "It must be borne in mind that this same capacity is the condition, as has been pointed out, no less of the vicious life than of the virtuous".<sup>2</sup> All the acts that are imputable to the agent must involve out of one's character. Therefore, as he conceives, "It is on the specific difference of the objects willed under the general form of self-satisfaction that the quality of the will must depend. It is here therefore that we must seek for the basis of distinction between goodness and badness of will".<sup>3</sup> Will should direct itself in a manner so as to fulfil the capabilities we owe to the eternal principle, in the satisfaction of which our true good consists. But Green finds our person to be truly satisfied only through a recognition of the 'person' of others as well. So a will is virtuous

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 211.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 175.

<sup>3</sup> Bk. III, Ch. I, p. 203.



or good only if it acts with the idea of satisfying oneself with reference to others as ends in themselves. "It is in this sense", Green contends, "that the old language is justified, which speaks of Reason as the parent of law. Reason is the self-objectifying consciousness. It constitutes, as we have seen, the capability in a man of seeking an absolute good and of conceiving this good as common to others with himself: and it is this capability which alone renders him a possible author and a self-submitting subject of law".<sup>1</sup>

I think, I should pause for a moment to look a little closely into the meaning of the term "reason" as Green employs it. We have seen that Green defines both reason and will to be exerted by the self-objectifying principle and to be present alike in vicious and virtuous life. But in case of vicious acts, these capacities do not lead towards a true development of the principle. A true development of will is co-extensive with a perfect development of reason. But as Green conceives, there seems to be a distinction between the two faculties for the imperfect consciousness of ours, while for a perfect intelligence they coincide. To an imperfect intelligence reason appears only as the source of virtuous acts. But we find, that what is conceived as reason here, is, in fact, a "better reason", which, as Green defines it, is no other than the same faculty present in vicious action, but only "so far as that capacity is informed by those true judgements in regard to human good which the action of the eternal principle in man has hitherto yielded; while the reason which shows itself in his actual vice is the same capacity, as taking its object and content from desire of which the satisfaction is inconsistent with the real bettering of man".<sup>2</sup> We may conclude from this that reason is no distinct faculty which gradually develops our will according to virtue. It is the faculty of self-consciousness, present in all our actions, and depends for its right direction on the nature of the objects it chooses. The definition of reason does not correspond to that given to it by Kant or Hegel, as to signify the principle of universality and truth. Green

<sup>1</sup> Bk. III, Ch. III, pp. 293-34.

<sup>2</sup> Bk. III, Ch. I, pp. 204.



defines conscience, which in association with the reason embodied in laws, institutions and habits is thought to be the main spring of moral progress, by saying, 'The individual's conscience is reason in him as informed by the work of reason without him in the structure and controlling sentiment of society'.<sup>1</sup> The definition of reason conforms to Green's definition of "better reason". "The 'better' reason", as he says, "is his capacity for conceiving a good of his own, so far as that capacity is informed by those true judgments in regard to human good which the action of the eternal spirit in man has hitherto yielded",<sup>2</sup> while he admits, the reason which shows itself in vice, to be the same capacity only wrongly informed. And reason only in this sense of "better reason" is distinguished from will, and only in this sense Green conceives it "not as gradually unfolding itself in us, but as in the perfection to which that process tends, and which we must suppose to be actually attained in the eternal mind—a fully articulated idea of the best life for man, and accordingly speak of life according to reason as the goal of our moral effort".<sup>3</sup> In other words, it comes to represent here the perfect state of personality which is our moral ideal, and in this sense Green conceives it to be no other than the eternal mind which embodies all sorts of perfection that we are to achieve. The eternal mind representing the moral perfection is thus no embodiment of any separate faculty, but is the same self-objectifying principle of consciousness, be it reason or will, realised with the objects that conduce to the highest perfection of human life. It is in this sense that we are justified in describing the moral ideal to exist not only *for*, but *as*, an eternal consciousness that contains all our ideal perfection in itself. As Green puts it: "There must be eternally such a subject which is all that the self-conscious subject, as developed in time, has the possibility of becoming: in which the idea of human spirit, or all that it has in itself to become, is completely realised".<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bk. III, Ch. III, p. 250.

<sup>2</sup> Bk. III, Ch. I, p. 204.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 205.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, Bk. III, Ch. II, p. 215.



Anyway, Green sometimes seems to offer a different meaning to reason. We are familiar with his conception of reason as one's capacity for seeking one's good in conformity with the good of others. In this sense it is one with virtue, and we can describe our moral progress as a history of development determined by reason only if we explain it in this way. But reason is sometimes conceived to be a distinct faculty of mind by virtue of which it forms true judgments, and which tends towards a gradual development. To state in the language of Green himself: "It is only misleading when we overlook the rational capacities implied in the origin and maintenance of such law and custom. The most elementary moralisation of the individual must always have arisen from his finding himself in the presence of a requirement, enforced against his inclinations to pleasure, but in an interest which he can recognise as being his own, no less than the interest of those by whom the requirement is enforced"<sup>1</sup>. It is not possible to explain reason here as 'better reason', for the 'better reason', as we have seen, is no separate "rational capacities" which we possess as against our "inclinations to pleasure." Green's idea of God as eternal reason may also be pressed here as an instance. As he says, "God is for ever reason—not abstract reason—but giving life to the whole system of experience which makes the history of human life. His revelation to human life must take the form of an unexhausted series of spiritual discipline through all the agencies of social life"<sup>2</sup>. This definition of reason conforms to the Hegelian concept of it. Reason, in this sense, is not the highest realm of human perfection, nor even the bare principle of self-objectification. It is the eternal principle of perfection that resides in every heart and gradually tends towards the highest manifestation of its own.

But these conflicting views of Green on the nature of reason bring out the inconsistency of his idea of God or the eternal consciousness. There is little chance of ascribing any theological attribute to God as He is defined in the

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, Bk. III, Ch. III, p. 237.

<sup>2</sup> *Works of Green*, Vol. III, edited by Nettleship, p. 239.



statement taken from Green's "Works".<sup>1</sup> We may also refer to another passage quoted before. In that statement Green conceives of an eternal self-conscious subject to embody all the perfection we are capable of in our moral life.<sup>2</sup> With reference to these two statements we may explain God or the eternal consciousness as the perfect realm of morality, the end of our moral endeavour, which is ideally real. It is the ideal standard of all moral judgments, the implied measure of all values of human life. None of us can afford to achieve that ideal, yet it is absolutely real in the sense that it could have been realised if the principle of our moral progress would develop to its perfection. It is no error to describe it as a "self-conscious subject", for it would only mean the state of life that a self-conscious subject might gain in its perfection. But Green imports some theological ideas into his metaphysical ethics. The attitude of "awe and inspiration" which we are asked to adopt towards the eternal mind as against the attitude of knowledge, suggests a feeling of faith and reverence peculiar to a theistic philosophy. Moreover, to say, as Green says, that our progress in moral life has meaning only with reference to a consciousness for which it already actually exists in its perfection<sup>3</sup> obviously implies the concept of a self-conscious eternal self to which all our possibilities belong as being perfectly realised, and which embodies the idea of a theological God. I shall consider the implications of these ideas later. But now I proceed to consider some other points more important for our purpose.

### Section VII

According to Green, we must seek our own good in conformity with the good of others as ends in themselves. So, in our own person, as well as in the person of others, our sole interest consists in promoting good will regarding the motive as well as the effect of a moral act. For he says,

<sup>1</sup> See the last quotation.

<sup>2</sup> See above, *Prolegomena*, Bk. III, Ch. II, p. 215.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 214.



"If we hold according to the explanation previously given, that the one unconditional good is the good will, this must be the end with reference to which we estimate the effects of an action."<sup>1</sup> A moral act is good in its effect so far as it produces good will in the agent and in others. In general, as Green contends, the good will in the motive is exactly measurable by the amount of good will in the effect.<sup>2</sup> But he admits at the same time, that "in judging of another's action, we have not enough insight into motive to be warranted in founding our moral estimate on anything but the effects of the action."<sup>3</sup> Nor is it possible to have a sufficient account of the effect of a moral action of our own or of others on persons other than ourselves so far as the effect refers to the production of good will. As Green conceives, "With the whole of spiritual history of the action before us on one side, with the whole sum and series of its effects before us on the other, we shall presumably see that just so far as a good will, *i.e.* a will determined by interest in objects contributory to human perfection, has had more or less to do with bringing the action about, there is more or less good, *i.e.* more or less contribution to human perfection, in its effects."<sup>4</sup> Now, whatever truth the idea of this test of morality may contain, it is not possible in practice to deduce a moral judgment according to this standard. For, we have never in our hands the whole spiritual history of an action and the entire sum and series of its effects before we judge a moral action. Green admits this difficulty. But we are not even conscious of the whole spiritual history of an action of our own except in unusual instances, and so, we have no right to judge our own motive to be good or bad if the criterion given by Green is to be accepted. Yet Green finds nothing to prevent us from answering a question regarding one's own motives.<sup>5</sup> But it seems to me that Green gives more importance to the sincerity of one's judgment regarding one's own motive than to the knowledge

<sup>1</sup> *Prolegomena*, Bk. IV, p. 347.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 354.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 353-54.

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 354-55.



of the entire spiritual history of one's action. Moreover, to estimate a moral action with reference to its effects (not to speak of the whole sum and series of the effects) is to judge it by something of which we have no sound knowledge, and on which we have no absolute hold. So he says, "what is of importance is that I should keep alive that kind of sense of shortcoming in my motives and character, which is the condition of aspiration and progress towards higher goodness. And to this end, while the question whether I have been duly patient and considerate and unbiassed by passion or self-interest in taking account of the probable consequences of my act, is an essential question—a question which only needs that I should be honest with myself, not clever or well-informed, to answer—the question how the action has turned out in respect of consequences which I had not the requisite knowledge or ability to foresee, may be left aside without practical harm."<sup>1</sup>

However, Green conceives that, "The comparison of our own practice, as we know it on the inner side in relation to the motives and character which it expresses, with an ideal of virtue, is the spring from which morality perpetually renews its life . . . It is because certain men have brought home to themselves in a contrast between what they should be and what they are, which was awakened in the sense of a personal responsibility for improvement."<sup>2</sup> We may refer to this the general reformation of society or the discharge of any particular duty allotted to the position one occupies in society. This self-reflection may not bring any actual difference to the outward effects of an action. It may conduce to the correct performance of a duty fixed for a person in a particular station by acting with the most sincere motive in spite of making no remarkable change in the outward form of the action. Or, one's conscience may offer a new interpretation to a familiar duty that means a progressive determination of the principle of self-consciousness in our persons. This implies a subjective determination of the objective value, the significance of which I shall now consider.

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 367.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 351-55.



*Section VIII*

Let us now see what concept of value Green offers in his philosophy. For Green the concept of value arises only in reference to self-realisation. And this is the self-realisation of a person. As he says, "All other values are relative to value for, of, or in a person."<sup>1</sup> The self-realisation of the person is the ultimate worth with reference to which we are to assess the value of all other achievements in life. Or, rather, the achievement is no achievement for us unless it refers to the person, *i.e.* is some good to his self.

We find that this idea of value conforms in a way to the Hegelian conception of self-realisation. We see that like Hegel, Green places the concept of value in the life of finite spirits (or 'persons', he says) alone. For, the necessity of self-realisation exists only for those who are yet incomplete in themselves and at the same time have the concept of an ideal perfection of their own, however implicit, to move them onwards to a better realisation of their self. The eternal principle of consciousness like the Absolute in Hegel has a part in this process of self-realisation only in so far as the finite self is a mode of it. Green, however, offers a further significance to our finite personality by defining our self-realisation to be involved in the process of reality as such. Our self-realisation as 'person' is no unreal contradiction that exists in the Absolute only as 'transformed'. The eternal principle of consciousness directly reflects in the 'persons' or the self-conscious spirits, under certain limitations, but with the character of self-objectification, which is its essence, to be present in each of us, by virtue of which we are 'persons'. It is the irreducibility of 'persons' to anything else, that suggests them to be real in themselves, and the world to exist for a principle that presents itself in them.<sup>2</sup> And because of this irreducibility of the persons, the divine principle should be supposed to realise itself in persons as such.<sup>3</sup> Nothing is good, he

<sup>1</sup> *Prolegomena*, Bk. III, Ch. II, p. 210.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*



says, if it implies the extinction of a self-conscious personality.

We have seen that a theory which presents the self-realisation of the person as the ideal and conceives reality as embodying his perfection, considers reality as value, nay, as a moral value.<sup>1</sup> One discovers in one's own person a motive to achieve that ideal level, we call reality, for the sake of the perfection of one's own. Obviously, this motive calls for the most sincere endeavour for the realisation of its end. As a matter of fact, a man always seeks for some personal good. However noble the object is, none of us sets himself to pursue it except on the belief that the achievement will bring in a satisfaction (not a hedonistic one) of his own. Our motive is always personal, and so, the object we are to realise is valuable to us. An end cannot move one to action unless it means something for him. Therefore, in a sense, we are always in search of a realisation of some value, whatever be our object. Green's theory of metaphysical ethics conforms to this idea. But Green's concept of personality, as we have seen, is controversial. We have in him an adequate theory of value, if he means by 'person' a unique self-conscious being existing with his feelings and desires, and can conceive Reality as the real fulfilment of his essence. Green holds this position so far as he finds the self-conscious principle in man to exist essentially in conjunction with his peculiar thoughts and desires. But we are confused by a further contention, that personality means *nothing more than* the principle of self-objectification, but for which it is not definable as a reflection of the divine. But if self-realisation of a person is conceived as a development of the *bare* principle of self-consciousness or self-objectification, do we not find that Green is liable to the charge of formalism, that nullifies the conception of a concrete value by denying that a man should ask for the fulfilment of his concrete existence consisting of various interests and desires? Yet I do not think that Green is so easily liable to the charge of formalism. For though he conceives good will, after the manner of Kant, to treat every person as an end in himself to be the only

<sup>1</sup> See above, Secs. I and II, p. 208.



unconditional good, a will for Green must necessarily refer to objects. The ultimate concern of a will is bound to be the person if personality is the standard of all our worth. But the person is never conceived to be a blank consciousness. It consists, as we have seen, of several interests, habits and thoughts, among which of course is the interest in the personality of others, that conduces best to one's own perfection. Green admits that, in spite of referring to the same context of personal well-being, the objects on which we set our heart vary from the acquisition of an estate, election to Parliament, to the execution of some design in literature or art, which involve the satisfaction of many different desires.<sup>1</sup> But we must refer at the same time to his argument that in order to do justice to the goods we seek, personality of all must be non-competitive in their nature. We agree with Sidgwick<sup>2</sup> to say that the objects we desire essentially call for competition. The pursuit of science, literature and the like definitely admits of competition, which as it seems to me, is the instinct for progress. To take away from human life the scope for a fair competition, is to empty it of the urge towards the realisation of any value. In our ordinary course of self-realisation, the sense of competition is always implicitly present. We often seek for a further development of our self either because we feel ourselves deficient in comparison with others, or because we want to transcend the level of perfection around us.

In this connection I may refer to Green's idea of the determination of moral progress by a sense of personal responsibility for making the best of themselves in family, society or State, that sometimes occur to certain persons, who feel the necessity for a new moral order, or some change in the existing standard in order perfectly to discharge their duties.<sup>3</sup> The idea is significant so far as our moral progress is concerned. But the idea of competition does not seem to be totally absent from this conception of progress. And even if it is so, we must say that the self-realisation of ordinary

<sup>1</sup> *Prolegomena*, Bk. II, Ch. II, p. 143.

<sup>2</sup> *Green's Ethics*, Mind, April, 1884.

<sup>3</sup> *Prolegomena*, Bk. IV, Ch. I, pp. 370-71.



people does not always proceed with a conscious idea of a moral progress. In our common life we endeavour to satisfy ourselves with various objects and ideas before us, which obviously admits of competition as we know.<sup>1</sup> So we see, that though as a theory of idealism which seeks reality to be realised through the necessity for self-realisation of a person, Green's philosophy has significance as a theory of value, his confused views of the concept of personality divests it of all that.

Further, Green presents the eternal consciousness as a subject which embodies all the perfection that a human spirit ideally conceives to be the complete realisation of his self.<sup>2</sup> But if the ideal of each self to an extent is unique for his own, as it must be, if we take a concrete definition of personality, how can a single subject represent the ideal perfection of all? Certainly, the eternal consciousness can be conceived to be the perfect form of self-consciousness and thus as embodying the ideal of all persons, if by person we understand no more than the bare principle of self-consciousness. But we cannot decide this or that way unless we are given a definite idea of personality, which, as we have seen, is not given here. And it is doubtful, whether mere self-consciousness, however completely realised, has any possibility as a moral ideal.

Green further conceives God or the divine eternal subject as one who contains in himself all the perfection we attain or aim to attain, and to which our due attitude, as he conceives, should be one of self-abasement, awe and inspiration. But the concept fails to serve as the moral ideal of our persons. For, in the first place, it has not that comprehensiveness of the Hegelian Absolute, to afford a sufficient place for the self-realisation of each of its members. It mostly represents itself as a God in religion, which sets a contradiction in the philosophy of Green by asking for self-abasement from a being whose essence consists in self-consciousness. In the second place, it makes the idea of moral initiative on the part of man meaningless by rendering the path of his progress already determined for him.

<sup>1</sup> See Sidgwick's, *Green's Ethics*, Mind, April, 1884.

<sup>2</sup> *Prolegomena*, Bk. III, Ch. II, p. 215.



However, we now come to discuss another point, which is relevant to the main theme of this essay. The perfection of ourselves as persons, as Green says, consists in the complete development and satisfaction of the capabilities we owe to the eternal. But he regards the perfection to be unattainable in human life. As he says, "It is the only procedure suited to the matter in hand, to say that the goodness of man lies in devotion to the ideal of humanity, and then that the ideal of humanity consists in the goodness of man. It seems that such an ideal, not yet realised but operating as a motive, already constitutes in man an inchoate form of that life, that perfect development of himself, of which the completion would be the complete ideal."<sup>1</sup> But the self-communication of the eternal in man is never complete, and for that reason, the capabilities we owe to it are not realised in any life, and so we cannot say what the capabilities are.<sup>2</sup> The impossibility of the ideal being ever realised, I think, can be taken to be a reason for the complete collapse of all moral efforts. But Green attempts to solve the difficulty by the idea of our essence and value to be preserved in and through the existence of other men in society. As he puts it: "It must have been so, because it is a man's thought of himself as permanent that gives rise to the idea of such a good, and because the thought of himself as permanent is inseparable from the identification of himself with others, in whose continued life he contemplates himself as living; and because further, as a consequence of this, the objects which the effort to realise this thought brings into being, and in contemplation of which the idea of permanent good passes from the more blindly operative to the more clearly conscious stage, are arrangements of life, or habits of action, or applications of the forces of products of nature, calculated to contribute to a common well-being."<sup>3</sup> Green conceives it to be a reason for our consideration of others as ends in themselves, as a society, for Green, as we know, consists of persons, each recognised as an end. But how do we expect to live in the person of

<sup>1</sup> *Prolegomena*, Bk. III, Ch. II, p. 225.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, Bk. III, Ch. II, p. 206.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, Bk. III, Ch. IV, pp. 271-72.



others? The existence in society does not involve any question of personal immortality, an idea that Green denies in every sense except as a determination of thought. Our unique personality which is constituted of the principle of self-objectification working upon the feelings and thoughts, we inherit from the animal nature, and which, therefore, must be peculiar to each of us, ends with one's death. And we know that, according to Green, there can be no good which is based on the idea of the extinction of a self-conscious person. The object of one's pursuit, with which one identifies oneself in idea, exists so long as the person remains, and has any value so far as pursued by him. I indeed fail to understand how the self-realisation of a person continues in any sense after the extinction of that person. It may be contended that human society presupposes persons each recognised by others as a self-conscious being, as an end by himself, and realising himself as an end, and they are permanent by virtue of this capacity. But this idea of permanence is yet more confusing. For, if has not been decided, in the first place, whether the principle of consciousness exists apart from the feelings and thoughts that belong to a concrete person, and, on the other, it is simply inconceivable how the continuance of the element of self-consciousness in others in any way helps me as a particular person to exist with them.

### *Section IX*

With this I should like to end our discussion. But before I finish, I think, I must refer to an implication inherent in Green's philosophy. This implication, if it would have been properly developed, would have the appearance of a full-fledged theory of value akin to that of Bosanquet.

The existence of persons could be given a guarantee of permanence in society, if only by existence Green could understand the existence as value. That is to say, he would have to conceive of the persons to exist in posterity through the values they create in the forms of literature, art, institutions and laws. Green has a tendency towards this idea. The conception that one's self-realisation should constantly





refer to the existing customs, laws and literature that register the height of progress the idea of humanity has so far made<sup>1</sup>, may be taken to suggest that further values should be created with reference to the values so far achieved by human beings. But Green does not care to develop this implication. He does not tell us how and in what sense our personality is preserved in these forms, a difficulty which is obviously due to his confused view of 'person'.

<sup>1</sup> *Prolegomena*, Bk. II, Ch. I, Sec. 93.





## CHAPTER VI

### THE NEO-HEGELIAN THEORY OF VALUE

#### PART I

##### *Section I*

In the history of idealist philosophy, Bosanquet for the first time gives us an exposition of the concept of value. We may bring out his contention by the single statement that the values that evolve in the life of finite beings are the real phases of the Absolute. That is, the values that a particular being manifests in the course of his self-realisation, which is, in fact, a gradual realisation of his own nature as determined by the whole, are real as an account of the mode of the self-expression of the Absolute, while the particular existence of the self itself is nothing but a vanishing entity. The content of this idea will be clear as we proceed.

Bosanquet is, however, persuaded to adopt this position by Hegel, on the one hand, and by Green, on the other. He seeks to answer the question regarding the preservation of the essence of our being, as it is raised by Green. Bosanquet suggests that man should eternally live through the values he creates.

##### *Section II*

Bradley and Bosanquet together have often been described to constitute a single philosophical personality<sup>1</sup>, and a discussion about any one of them must have a reference to the other. It is true that an elaborate exposition of the concept of value is found in the philosophy of Bosanquet alone. But Bradley's philosophy, which proceeds on the same line with Bosanquet, (or rather, to whom Bosanquet owes his theory of metaphysics) also finds our finite life to be a

<sup>1</sup> Metz, *Hundred Years of British Philosophy*.



continuous search after some ideal of perfection, though it does not ascribe anything more than an empirical validity to this search. Bosanquet accepts the main scheme of Bradley's philosophy. He only develops some implications of it and modifies it in certain respects in order to emphasise the problem of value.

### *Section III*

For Bradley as well as for Bosanquet reality is the infinite eternal whole. Both of them, in other words, inherit their systems from Hegel. The finite world exists in the Absolute as a moment of its self-realisation. But this idea is interpreted differently by the two philosophers. Now, we have seen that the role of evolution of finite consciousness with reference to the Absolute, as conceived by Hegel, admits of varying explanations. It has been conceived that reality is a self-accomplished whole and the finite world in all its manifestations is eternally present in it. While McTaggart finds the unique characters of selves to constitute the true differentiations of the Absolute Spirit, Bradley emphasises the character of infinity and absoluteness of reality to the extent that the pursuit of any ideal in finite life is conceived to be a mere appearance presenting itself as real to our inadequate consciousness. Of course, Bradley would admit that the ideal perfection we aspire after in finite life ultimately refers to reality. But due to the contradiction inherent in finite nature as such the ideal perfection, as we find it in our moral and intellectual life, necessarily presents itself as incapable of being achieved. The Absolute as such cannot realise itself in a nature which is relative and finite in its essence.

Bradley makes an advance upon Hegel by defining reality not only as experience, but as sentient experience—the immediate sentient experience of the perfect unity of the universe. Relation, succession and mediation have no place in the concept of reality. For him there is no self-realisation except for the finite selves.<sup>1</sup> The Absolute is eternally

<sup>1</sup> *Appearance and Reality* (9th impression, Oxford publication), p. 365.





complete and awaits no further realisation. So, the progressive self-realisation in finite life has no significance for the Absolute as such.

The idea of truth, as we conceive it, represents the unity of the ideal content of an idea and its existence, and goodness the realisation of the ideal in one's will and action. But a self has its perfection only as a moment in the life of the Absolute. So its finite experiences with all their excellences cannot satisfy it and constantly involve self-transcendence in the course of self-realisation. But the unity of the ideal and the existent, whether in knowledge or in life, is never realised in finite life. For not only does the finite nature fall short of the infinite, but the way it seeks to approach its ideal is itself defective, as it involves relation and succession which only takes it away from the immediate apprehension of the whole. Now, as Bradley states, " Truth is the object of thinking, and the aim of truth is to qualify existence ideally. Its end, that is, is to give a character to reality in which it can rest. Truth is the predication of such content, as, when predicated, is harmonious, and removes inconsistency and with it unrest"<sup>1</sup>. But finite thought is necessarily relational. It makes a distinction between the ideal content of the predicate and the idea by means of which we want to define it. Thought relates the idea to the ideal content of its predicate, but it can never unite these two in a way so that the subject may be equal to the predicate, specially because the immediate unity which characterises the nature of reality cannot be recovered through relations which necessarily presuppose distinction among the related terms. But as Bradley says, " Thought is relational and discursive, and if it ceases to be this, it commits suicide, and yet if it remains thus, how does it contain immediate presentation"<sup>2</sup>. There is no answer so far as thought itself is concerned. For, as he contends, " The predicate must be always ideal. It must, that is, be a ' what ' not in unity with its own ' that ', and therefore, in and by itself, devoid of existence. Hence, so far as in thought this alienation is

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 145.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 150.



not made good, thought can never be more than merely ideal".<sup>1</sup> Of course, truth as the ideal unity of existence and ideal content refers to reality itself, for this ideal unity exists only in the experience of the Absolute, which at once reveals the full meaning of what is implied by our idea. But our defect, as we have seen, lies in seeking the way to this unity through thought, and truth as *the ideal of thought* is an impossible concept. Therefore, Bradley finds it to be a fact that, "Truth belongs to existence, but it does not as such exist. It is a character which indeed reality possesses, but a character which, as truth and as ideal, has been set loose from existence; and it is never rejoined to it in such a way as to come together singly and *make* fact. Hence truth shows a dissection and never an actual life. Its predicate can never be equivalent to its subject. And if it becomes so, and if its adjectives could be at once self-consistent and re-welded to existence, it would not be truth any longer. It would have then passed into another and a higher reality".<sup>2</sup>

Such is also the idea of goodness. Goodness represents the ideal of moral life which consists in the achievement of the ideal state of existence for our will. But it obviously involves at the same time a contradiction between the ideal and the existing state of a man aspiring after the ideal. Let me look closely into the concept of goodness. Bradley begins with a general definition of good as that which satisfies desire. It, like truth, implies a unity of idea and existence. But he says, "In truth we start with existence, as being the appearance of perfection, and we go to complete ideally what really must be there. In goodness, on the other hand, we begin with an idea of what is perfect, and we then make, or else find, the same idea in what exists. Goodness is the verification in existence of a desired ideal content, and it thus implies the measurement of fact by a suggested idea".<sup>3</sup> But later he comes to limit the idea of goodness to the sphere of will. In this sense, as he says, "The good, in short, will

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 146.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 147.

<sup>3</sup> *Appearance and Reality*, p. 356.





become the realised end or completed will."<sup>1</sup> Morality, as Bradley conceives, is co-extensive with self-realisation, but in order to avoid confusion, he defines it as the self-realisation of a person with reference to his will. Now, in a sense, there is no sphere of human life which is not the concern of morality, as there is none which has not been brought under the control of will. By this assertion Bradley does not intend to deny that the different realms of life have the peculiar excellences of their own. What he means is this that each of our actions can be explained as a case for morality if and when considered as the expression of will. An act is judged morally when we consider it by virtue of the nature of the will behind it. We may try to understand the point at issue with reference to Kant's theory of morality. Indeed, Bradley accepts the maxim that nothing is morally good save a good will.<sup>2</sup> It follows from this that, "Strictly speaking and in the proper sense morality is self-realisation in the sphere of the personal will. We see this plainly in art and science, for there we have moral excellences, and that excellence does not live in mere skill or mere success, but in single-mindedness and devotion to what seems best as against what we merely happen to like. From the highest point of view you judge a man moral not so far as he has succeeded outwardly, but so far as he has identified his will with the universal whether that will was properly externalised itself or not . . . strictly speaking, it does not fall beyond the subjective side, the personal will and the heart."<sup>3</sup> In a moral judgment we are only concerned with the personal character of the agent and with nothing beyond it. To put it in Bradley's language, "To be a good man in all things and everywhere, to try to do always the best, and to do one's best in it, whether in lonely work or in social relaxation to suppress the worse self and realise the good self, this and nothing short of this is the dictate of morality."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 365.

<sup>2</sup> *Ethical Studies*, 2nd edn., Oxford, 1935, p. 228.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 229.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 215.



So, in a sense, morality becomes co-extensive with life, and goodness is "the *willed* reality of its perfection by a soul".<sup>1</sup>

But Bradley makes an advance upon Kant. For, though he considers good will to be the highest object of moral life, it must be a concrete will at the same time. Morality is concerned with one's self-realisation, but it must also consider in what does consist the true self of a man. That is, we have to see what is the content of the self which seeks to realise itself. Bradley finds the contents of the ideal self to be two in number. These refer to one's existence as a social and as a non-social being. The moral obligation of a man in relation to society has its significance in this that a man is "the individual embodiment of a larger life".<sup>2</sup> The larger life of society, State, nation or family in which a man lives, enters into his nature and constitutes his character. A man is what he is by virtue of his relations to other men in society or in family,<sup>3</sup> and so he cannot realise himself without the fulfilment of the obligations involved out of these relations. Bradley makes an elaborate discussion of this point in his *Ethical Studies*. It is not possible for me to consider it here. I will only refer to the fact that for Bradley, moral duties of a man are to a large extent relative to the station he occupies in the society in which he lives and are therefore determined by it. He thinks that a little consideration will reveal to us the fact that throughout the most of our life our good will finds its sphere of action mainly in our relations to the people around us.

Yet our social duty is not always complete with the fulfilment of the existing moral obligations. Out of the lessons from the existing social traditions and obligations, not only in our own country, but all over the world, we sometime come to form, by means of imagination, the concept of an ideal type of social morality, which is actually realised in no existing society. This ideal social self we

<sup>1</sup> *Appearance and Reality*, p. 366.

<sup>2</sup> *Ethical Studies*, p. 220.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 165.





can consider to be the true realisation of ourselves as social beings as it is conceived to solve the contradictions of the present life to a certain extent. But in fact, the perfect social ideal is never realised because the actual is ceaselessly transcended by the constant urge of human mind to realise itself better.

However, Bradley is aware that there are certain spheres of our life in which we truly realise ourselves but which do not involve any direct relation to society. In his own words, "But there remains in the good self a further region we have not yet entered on; an ideal, the realisation of which is recognised as a moral duty, but which in its essence does not involve any direct relation to other men. The realisation for myself of truth and beauty, the living for the self which in the apprehension, the knowledge, the sight, and the love of them finds its true being, is a moral obligation, which is not felt as such only so far as it is too pleasant".<sup>1</sup> It is true that science and art would not have arisen except for a social environment. But it is not true to say that society is the ultimate end for the sake of which an artist must work. Yet his work is moral in the sense that it is an earnest attempt to realise himself in the best of his possibilities. As Bradley thinks, "It is a moral duty for the artist or the inquirer to lead the life of one, and a moral offence when he fails to do so",<sup>2</sup> though he admits that it is a kind of morality past ordinary morality.

A conflict between the demands of these various selves may easily arise. But Bradley leaves such conflicts to be solved by those who are actually involved in them. As a general remark he only states that nowhere should there be a breach of the essence of morality. On certain occasions we may need to avoid an ordinary moral obligation for the sake of something in which the moral self expects a better satisfaction, but otherwise the slightest breach of a moral duty is really dangerous, because, as he says, "the will for good, if weakened in one place, runs the greatest risk of being weakened in all".<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 222.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 222-23.

<sup>3</sup> *Ethical Studies*, p. 227.



However, it comes about that, morality or goodness is concerned with self-realisation by virtue of good will. But in order to be truly obedient to one's good will one needs to have a harmony of one's desires, so that he can obey the imperative of the good self without any opposition from his own desires. Therefore, the moral ideal is not of a number of distinct moments of goodwill, but of a consistent character. As he finds, "Our character formed by habit is the present state of our will, and though, we may not be fully aware of its nature, yet morally it makes us what we are".<sup>1</sup> So good will can only be the result of a good character. In his *Appearance and Reality* also Bradley defines goodness as the perfect realisation of an individual self which must include both harmony and extent.<sup>2</sup> For, on the one hand, it must present itself as an ideal which refers to all the sides of our nature, while on the other, it must harmonise them all with the idea of a perfect system which is not exposed to contradiction. But goodness, thus defined, refers to the Absolute itself. The Whole alone is capable of explaining the different spheres of human life, which appear to contradict one another, to be consistently and necessarily cohering in a perfectly systematic way. And in this sense the Absolute, as Bradley conceives it, may be defined to be 'good'.<sup>3</sup> Non-contradiction is the only principle of reality, the positive implication of which is that reality is the whole, and so harmony and extent can never come together in a finite life. Now, though he ascribes goodness to reality by way of analogy, Bradley at the same time asserts that, "Will implying a process in time, cannot belong, as such, to the Absolute; and on the other side, we cannot assume the existence of ends in the physical world".<sup>4</sup> When harmony and extent come together, the ideal is indeed achieved, but there we are no longer within the realm of morality, for when the ideal is actually realised, will has nothing to aim at and to realise. Morality, as we conceive it, necessarily

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 243.

<sup>2</sup> P. 367.

<sup>3</sup> *Appearance and Reality*, pp. 364-65.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 365.



involves conflicts. For, "a being not limited, and limited by evil in himself, is not what we call moral".<sup>1</sup> A moral will is necessarily finite and have a natural basis which involves such dispositions which have a tendency to hold us back from our moral duties, and it is by subduing this 'bad self' that the moral self establishes itself. It presupposes in this way the existence of the 'bad self', and though the value of a moral action is to be judged by its positive achievement, yet it must be understood as against the opposite element in our nature which it has subdued, and the moral strength of a character is revealed in this act of subduing. In this conquest, the good self will not only subdue the bad one, but will transmute the energy of the self concentrated in the 'bad self' to the service of its own.<sup>2</sup> Morality aims at the cessation of the conflict between the good and the bad self, but when the conflict is over, morality also ceases to exist. Therefore, it may be said, as Bradley finds, that morality aims at the cessation of that which makes it possible.<sup>3</sup>

Nevertheless, it is true, that though the moral ideal presents itself with contradiction, it somehow suggests that the perfection of the finite life lies in the Whole. In our constant but inadequate effort to realise our best, we transcend our limited self and have recourse to a wider conception of life. Therefore, Bradley asserts that, "All morality, all identification of the will with the ideal, demands the suppression of the self in some form; and so, though self-realisation, yet at the same time is self-sacrifice".<sup>4</sup>

Reflection on this contradictory nature of morality leads us beyond it. It leads us to see, in other words, the necessity of the religious point of view. Religion is more than morality in the sense that, while for morality the ideal self is never more than an idea, religion conceives its object as really existent. The object of religion, as Bradley states it

<sup>1</sup> *Ethical Studies*, p. 234.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, 233.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 234.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 304.



to be, is, "the ideal self considered as realised and actual".<sup>1</sup> It must therefore find the self to be infinite, for nothing in the finite life can be above all contradictions. In fact, religion involves the idea that the ideal self which is the object of our moral life is the real self, and the part of our nature which is in conflict with this ideal is but an unreal appearance, an evil, which is to be arrested. Religion is of course a matter of will as it is an implication of morality,<sup>2</sup> but the true nature of religious experience can be grasped when it is defined as an object of faith. Faith presupposes will, but as distinguished from the will which is the concern of morality, it assumes at the same time the absolute belief that the object of the will is real.

Thus religion gives us an idea of the infinite nature of the self. But it also implies a necessary relation to finite life, and therefore, the infinite self is never actually realised in this life as we live it, though we may know the infinite self to be the true being of ourselves. The evilness of our nature is not totally extinguished so long as we are finite. As Bradley puts it, "We find ourselves as this or that will, against the object as the real ideal will, which is not ourselves, and which stands to us in such way that, though real, it is to be realised, because it is all and the whole reality".<sup>3</sup> The infinite self, though it is the true being of ourselves and is an actualisation of our moral ideal, is also a "not self" as against this or that particular self absorbed in contradiction and evil.<sup>4</sup> In fact, in finite existence contradictions are never finally resolved. This is on the one hand due to our fragmentariness and on the other hand to the fact that, we try to obtain the immediate Whole through relation and time. Our life, as we live it, may be described as an endless search after the ideal of perfection as we conceive it in the different stages of our experience, and therefore, is definable in terms of value. But even if we take it to be so, the ultimate end must always lie beyond us.

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 319.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 353.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 320.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, Ch. "Ideal Morality".



need of nature. A world's excellence must include its members', and have a relation, or sort of kinship to it; but must be of the nature of greatness that goes beyond and sustains it."<sup>1</sup> However, it comes about that the finite entities of the universe have their real being in the Whole. But the Whole, as we know, is the 'world', made up of all sorts, each of which has its unique function as representing one of the differentiations through which the Whole maintains itself. Bosanquet conceives the world as a Whole, 'whose members also are worlds'.<sup>2</sup> In other words, its members are distinguished by their distinctive characters as concrete wholes of differentiations, each constituting a type of self-existent entity though in a relative sense, with all of which the Absolute is a living organism and a concrete universal. Therefore, for Bosanquet, "What has value is the contribution which the particular centre—a representative of certain elements in the whole—brings to the whole in which it is a member. Its particularity, as we shall see, is connected with its special contribution."<sup>3</sup> And he considers it to be the task of philosophy to determine the value of our different experiences.<sup>4</sup> Now though the finite beings are not the only concern of the universe, they have their task to perform. And for Bosanquet the universe, as he says, is "from the highest point of view, concerned with finite beings, a place of soul-making".<sup>5</sup> It is confirmed by history, religion, culture and civilisation, that it is the greatness and the moulding of the souls that we really care for.<sup>6</sup> To explicate this conception, by the making and moulding of souls what is really meant is the making of the most of what we have received.<sup>7</sup> That is to say, a self is to realise out of the situation in which it has been placed, the true significance of the Whole as it reflects itself in its particular context or

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 97.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 257.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, Ch. 1.

<sup>5</sup> P. 26.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 21.



maintains itself by the distinctiveness of this quarter. Let us see how he explains this idea of self-maintenance.

The ' Spirit of logic ' or the ' Spirit of the Whole ', as Bosanquet calls it, is the characteristic principle of reality and is at work in the universe. It is, in fact, the principle of coherence and acts in a way so as to resolve contradiction in order to determine the given experience as a distinctive feature of the Whole. It removes the apparent contradiction of this experience with the other elements in the universe with which it is then found to co-exist in a perfectly harmonious way. The principle is also described as the principle of individuality as it characterises the universe as a self-subsistent and self-distinguished Whole of unique moments, which possesses a uniqueness by means of them existing in a perfect mutual coherence. This spirit, as it inheres in a finite self, constantly tends to organise its own experiences in the light of the Whole. "It is this through which my perception of the earth's surface makes one system with my conception of the Antipodes, or the emotion attending the parental instinct passes into the wise tenderness of the civilised parent, and the instinct itself, we are told, develops into the whole structure of social beneficence. And it is this, only further pursued, that forces us to the conception of the Absolute. I am aware of no other point at which the arrest in the process may be justified."<sup>1</sup> And this must be the spirit of value at the same time. For we can realise the value of any of the features of our experience only when we see its function and significance with reference to the Whole. The process of value-realisation is no other than one of gradual appreciation of one's own position in the larger context of life to which it necessarily belongs. However, the spirit of the whole causes no external determination. In a finite self it is at the same time the spirit of freedom, as it resolves all oppositions that present themselves to us in the form of contradiction. Thus Bosanquet accepts the Hegelian conception of freedom as self-determination by the transcendence of all sorts of externalities. According to Bosanquet "What we call its (soul's) being moulded is but one side of the self-

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 267-68.



determination by which it transforms its partial world, eliciting the significance of externality."<sup>1</sup>

However, the realisation of value, as Bosanquet conceives along with the other Hegelian philosophers, is equal to the self-realisation of a finite being. But according to the definition of value given so far, value is equal to the significance that an experience or fact possesses as a unique moment of differentiation of the Absolute. And so we must say that value belongs not to the ideal itself, but to the experiences, as determined by their relation to it. As Bosanquet says with reference to the moral good, "Strictly, you do not value it, you value all else by it. Its value is the unit, and all other values must be adjusted so as to amount to it."<sup>2</sup> The ideal, *i.e.*, the Individual or the Whole may be described as the source and the ultimate measure of all values that we come to possess.

Now, the spirit of the Whole as it works in us is the spirit or self-maintenance, and it is active in the experiences that occur to us in the various contexts of our life. "It holds good, we have seen, of significant sensations as in beauty, and of feeling in the sense of emotion, or of pleasure and pain, no less than of strictly logical structures, such as science and philosophy, or of the ideas which operate in morality, in social behaviour, or in religion."<sup>3</sup> "Now", he continues, "all these types of experience are phases of individual living, stages in which the 'individual' maintains himself in different modes and degrees, and with different achievements in the way of completeness and consistency."<sup>4</sup> Thus in the course of their self-realisation the selves make several achievements—moral, aesthetic, intellectual and spiritual. But the spirit of the Whole, as it works in us, is not only comprehensive, but is creative as well. Bosanquet describes its action in us on the analogy of the creative form of art.<sup>5</sup> Our acts and ideas follow from the world like conclusion from premisses or like a poem from the author's

<sup>1</sup> *Value and Destiny of the Individual*, p. 16, ed.

<sup>2</sup> *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, pp. 310-11.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 269.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 334.



spirit.<sup>1</sup> They evolve, he says, out of the remoulding of the cosmos out of its own yearning for totality—the synthetic vitality of the logical spirit, which has been sometimes described as the greatest initiative for a creative genius. Now, a self, as Bosanquet defines it, is the active form of totality realising itself in a certain mass of experience as a striving towards unity and coherence. And its self-determination, as he says “is that of a logical world, ultimately, in the general type, one with the relation of a conclusion to premisses, by which a new and transfigured whole emerges from a mass of data which in one sense contains it, but which in another it transcends”.<sup>2</sup> Now, the emergence of the “transfigured Whole” out of the attempts of the selves to determine the utmost fulfilment of their own status takes the forms of various achievements in the spheres of art, morality and religion. These are phases of reality as such as they mark the process of the self-determination of the Whole in and through the evolution of finite life. They are the values achieved by a finite being, as it realises itself in them as a significant feature of the world. And it comes about that the values evolved in the life of a finite being are no illusion or appearance. This is a fact which must have been clear from our above contention. The criterion of truth and reality is the same, and the degrees of comprehensiveness reflected in the experiences represent the degrees of value they come to possess. Bosanquet understands by value that a man acquires “his contribution to it (the Whole) and his participation in it”.<sup>3</sup> He says, “In general, we know that what we care for, is safe through continuity with the Eternal”.<sup>4</sup> The relation between value and reality, I think is well expressed by the statement that, “The at-homeness in the Whole, the strength and vitality, which the very perils of the finite presuppose, and the fuller types of experience so persistently reveal, are not dwelt upon at large for theoretical purposes. But such experience, I

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 335.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 21.

<sup>4</sup> *Value and Destiny of the Individual*, p. 261.



hope, has been sufficiently indicated to exhibit the general nature of value—the perfection of the ultimate individuality—which the fragmentariness and conflicts of finite existence are the means of manifesting and sustaining, and his degree of identification with which constitutes the worth and destiny of every finite individual”.<sup>1</sup>

But though the values or the individuality of the finite life evolve out of the hazards and hardships of our life, Bosanquet regards the concept of personality, as we know it, to stand on such slippery ground that can provide no room for itself in reality. “What we call the ‘individual’” he says, “is not a fixed essence, but a living world of content, representing a certain range of externality, which in it strives after unity and true individuality or completeness because it has in it the active spirit of non-contradiction, the form of the Whole”.<sup>2</sup> Certainly it has a body, which enters into it and becomes its instrument for self-expression in a certain way. A particular individual, as known to us, is a world of experience whose centre is given in the body and in the range of externality which is communicated by means of it, the limit of which depends on his power of comprehension. The limit of this range varies to the extent that he describes a single mind to be constituted by and to control more bodies than one. To take the statement Bosanquet himself offers in his text, “They are centred *par excellence* no doubt in a range of externality which a single body focuses for a single mind each to each; but this immediate centredness is no ultimate limit for their comprehension; and there are many conditions under which it might truly be said that a single mind is constituted by and controls more bodies than one”.<sup>3</sup> In fact, the idea of transformation that directs the entire process of our self-realisation explains that in our gradual apprehension of the comprehensive nature of reality and so of ourselves as elements in it, we transcend the limits of our formal personality. Bosanquet defines this self-transcendence to be the destiny of finite individuals. As he

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 328.

<sup>2</sup> *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, p. 289.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 287.



puts it: "What really matters—what alone in the main, the future can conceivably have to offer—is to begin with no doubt, an increased wealth and harmony of finite existence, but further, because of along with this, a profounder sense of the worthlessness of the finite creature in and by himself, and a deeper union, through will and conviction, with the perfection of the Whole".<sup>1</sup> This is obviously a religious attitude and as an amount of self-transcendence is involved in each stage of our progressive self-determination the entire process of value-realisation in a sense may be said to be religious.<sup>2</sup>

Of course Bosanquet recognises persons in a sense to constitute the centres of value in reference to which we explain and evaluate our particular states of consciousness. Yet it is only so far as persons are 'individuals' that he conceives them to have a real status in the universe. They are good in so far as they are definable as the ends that explain our particular experiences. Bosanquet defines the concept of individuality thus: "It is all one whether we make non-contradiction, wholeness, or individuality our criterion of the ultimately real".<sup>3</sup> It is something that must stand by itself. It has, in short, "nothing without to set against it and which is pure self-maintenance within".<sup>4</sup> Uniqueness and originality maintained by profound comprehensiveness and exclusion of otherness, are the fundamental characteristics of individuality. And in this sense there can be only one individual—the Absolute. Finite persons are individuals only in a limited sense. And he says "Originality within finite conditions, is not in principle excluded by agreement or even by a large measure of repetition. Its essence lies in the richness and completeness of a self not in the non-existence of any other self approximating to it".<sup>5</sup> The definition of the individual within the limit of a finitude, as a mere exclusive entity is untrue to the extent that finite natures obviously enter into one another in several respects.

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 314.

<sup>2</sup> *Value and Destiny of the Individual*, Chap. VIII.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, p. 68.

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 69.





The finite 'self' is an "individual", as he says, only when his experiences constitute a stable content of his nature, i.e., when with them he forms a concrete and relatively non-contradictory whole that explains and becomes the point of reference for all his actions and as such represents a moment of determination of the Whole in itself. In short, a finite being is an individual by means of the self-consistency of his nature and not by virtue of his originality and distinctiveness.

Moreover, Bosanquet does not consider this merging of one's personality in the larger whole of the Absolute to be a great loss. For he thinks that, "What we really care about is not a simple prolongation of our "personal" existence, but whether accompanying prolongation or in the form of liberation, some affirmation of our main interests, or some refuge from the perpetual failure of satisfaction".<sup>1</sup> And, "When we are sure that things which we really care for are valued for us, and are by the very nature of the universe guaranteed as characters of the Reality throughout its appearances, it seems to me a mere want of consideration to deny the main problem of our continuance is in principle solved".<sup>2</sup> He refers in this connection to Green's statement, "We may in consequence justify the personal life, which historically or on earth is lived under conditions which thwart its development, is continued in a society".<sup>3</sup> And he thinks that what Green cares about is the preservation and continuance of what we cherish most and not the formal identity of ourselves as *persons*.<sup>4</sup> The greatest figures of history do not survive by means of their formal identities or the *mere* personal happenings of lives. They survive by virtue of their significance in the life of the universe. The incidents and activities of their lives which determine the nature of the society, State or the World at large are absorbed by virtue of their significance as the constituents of reality and come to determine our apparently contradictory experiences to a greater comprehensiveness.

<sup>1</sup> *Value and Destiny of the Individual*.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 260.

<sup>3</sup> *Green's Ethics*, Sec. 185.

<sup>4</sup> *Value and Destiny of the Individual*, p. 280.



### *Section V*

So we have an idea of the Neo-Hegelian conception of value as it is developed by Bradley and Bosanquet. The concept has been focused mainly in the philosophy of Bosanquet. For Bradley, as we have seen, self-realisation belongs only to the finite level of existence which he defines to be no better than appearance. He excludes from his concept of reality all sorts of relation and succession as a result of which the endeavour for the realisation of value in moral life, which is by all means temporal and relative, becomes absolutely impossible.

But it seems to me that Bradley's denial of relation in the constitution of reality not only abolishes the possibility of a concept of value, but also goes against the concept of reality as an organism or a system which obviously implies the idea of several elements cohering in a perfect way.

Moreover, Bradley contends that in moral life we realise our ideal self by accomplishing the tasks which are determined for us by our relations to others. But if relation itself is an unreal phenomenon and involves only contradictions, how is it that the ideal moral self comes to realise itself by the fulfilment of the moral obligations due to the self by the necessity of relations? Is it not then true that according to Bradley our progress in moral life, in spite of the contradiction involved in it, is measured by our progress towards reality?

We have seen that Bradley defines goodness to involve both harmony and extent. But harmony and extent in the true sense of the terms are possible in the Absolute. So he finds that the idea of goodness can be accomplished in the Absolute alone, though 'good' as the object of will cannot be really ascribed to it. But harmony certainly implies relation between the terms which are distinct from one another. And if the Absolute possesses harmony, how can it avoid relation altogether? There is another serious objection against this philosophy. I must say that not only does Bradley consider the pursuit of value in human life to be



only empirically valid, but he abolishes the initiative for such pursuit. If it is once ascertained that all our moral or even our intellectual achievements are only apparent and have no place in reality as such, why should we take pains to devote ourselves to the realisation of such objects? Bradley's theory of reality precludes the possibility of a moral endeavour and thus may tend to make us morally indifferent. Indeed, it leaves us indifferent to all sorts of values, for in spite of our most sincere efforts we shall not be able to reach the goal. Our history, civilisation, and the achievements in the various spheres of life have no significance in reality. Even at our best we are involved in an unresolvable contradiction and can never rise above mere appearance. Therefore, it comes about, that instead of explaining Bradley rather explains away this world with all its contents and values.

Bradley's theory of the degrees of truth and reality does not seem to be in conformity with this idea. For, if we are able to know the worth of our experience in relation to the real, how is it that we cannot strive to realise it truly in our life?

However, it is not necessary to deal with Bradley any more, as our concern is with the concept of value to which he affords only an empirical worth. So we come to Bosanquet and try to see how far he is able to give us a consistent idea of value.

It seems to me that Bosanquet solves the problem raised by Green with a certain misunderstanding of the problem itself. The problem, in short, is to keep alive the main interests in which a person finds his essence to consist and for the realisation of which he persuades himself throughout his life. Bosanquet indeed attempts a solution with a suggestion of the survival of the values that evolve in the course of our self-realisation. But he affords no scope for the reality of the person himself. He nullifies the idea of personality as an unreal empirical concept, the absolute identity of which he can neither define nor save from being merged in the wider context of the Absolute. Of course, Bosanquet contends that what we really care for is not the immortality of our formal personality as he finds it, but the preservation



of the objects of our interests. But it seems to me that Bosanquet rather misinterprets Green's idea to a certain extent, which is of course somehow due to the inconsistency on the part of Green himself in working out his concept. Bosanquet seeks to prove with the help of some quotations from Green that Green is rather anxious for the eternity of the essential interests of a person than for the endurance of the person himself. Certainly in a sense there is such an implication in Green. Yet, on the whole, Green finds the concept of personality to associate itself necessarily with the particular feelings and desires; and self-consciousness, which is the essence of personality never exists in a particular person apart from them. So, the preservation of the interests of a person cannot be conceived to rest on the unreality of the person as a particular concrete reality. If the very concept of person itself is an empirical illusion to whom should the interests actually belong? And if persons are themselves unreal entities, as Bosanquet would say, how should the values that evolve out of their endeavour be real and eternal? I do not understand how there can be values unless they refer to a unique creative and self-existent being. An object of value can be realised only with reference to the esteem and endeavours of a being or beings. Indeed, Bosanquet admits that values are in a sense relative to persons so far as persons are the individuals or wholes, to which experiences must refer. But at the same time he finds it difficult to conceive of an identity between the different levels of the life of a person which constitute the several stages of the realisation of values. So the centre of reference of our experiences must be constantly shifting, and I fail to see how one can form a whole with the experiences of one's own. In fact, this also necessitates the rejection of the idea of the differentiation of the 'World' into many 'worlds', for we cannot hope to constitute a concrete system with the experiences we come to possess in the course of our progress. It may be suggested, that we with all our experiences form a whole in the Absolute itself in which we find all our finite experiences to exist as transcended, yet ideally present 'moments'. But this only implies the absorption of ourselves as particular persons with our distinc-



tive interests and essence in the life of the whole, in which they are indeed significant, but in a way that means nothing for us except for the sake of an intellectual understanding of the ultimate nature of things. It cannot reason for the initiative that a particular person should feel to realise himself as this or that concrete personality. It is not easily understood how the idea of self-realisation can present itself as a concrete ideal of life and involve a regular determination of the entire life of a man for its pursuit, if there is no determinate being conscious of itself as such. It is true that we transcend our limits in the course of our progress, but that is no reason to deny the identity of our personality. A person welcomes changes and seeks for a better determination of his essence because he feels himself as enduring through the progress and enrich himself by it. If, on the contrary, he knows that he, as he exists as a unique entity in the universe, will be lost and his experience will be valued in so far as they are capable of being absorbed in the Absolute, nothing can persuade him to realise anything at all. Bosanquet's conception of the gradual realisation of values in human life is, in fact, the idea of the gradual transformation of the self. This transformation he must consider as real and significant from the metaphysical point of view, as he finds the Absolute to realise itself in the experiences of finite life. But the idea of transformation seems to possess very little significance without reference to something *which is transformed*. There must be a self, identical in itself, that can be supposed to gain in richness of contents and in concreteness so as to become truly 'individual'. Transformation without reference to an identical entity would imply a series of changing states.

So, Bosanquet's conception that the individuality of finite beings consists in stability and self-containedness also must lose its ground if he fails to refer the experiences of a man to one particular centre which is constituted by their conjoined effect. As he says, "The efforts of the finite creature to achieve the infinite experience naturally falls into series. But it is not the culminative events of this series, but a character to be won and developed by their means, that can bring the finite mind in any way near the perfection which



attracts it."<sup>1</sup> But, on the other hand, Bosanquet admits no stable personality which may develop its character by means of the series of events that occur to it.

It may be contended that Bosanquet makes a distinction between the empirical concept of personality and the metaphysical existence of a self. According to the Hegelian idea, reality involves time and the finite self must evolve in time, though in reality as such, it does not exist as an occurrence in a temporal series. So, our presence in the universe as a particular person has no place in the Absolute unless we are conceived as being *idealised* and transcended and our creations are significant so far as they mark this self-transcendence. Now, I do not intend to deny that persons as they exist, are but temporal entities. I would only like to assert that this can make no point against their reality. Moreover, as we have seen, Bosanquet does not find the empirical world to be baffled against the real by any absolute distinction. He believes the finite world to be a true revelation of the infinite itself. But he says that the existence of the selves as particular persons are yet not real, as by a further analysis they are found to be resolved in the larger Whole, though the determination of the course of the universe through the process of their self-realisation are the real phases of the Absolute. Persons endure only in the values they come to create. The great names, as he says, are rather absorbed in significance than are remembered as particulars. But the point is that what is thus absorbed is not on that account unreal. It is true that our own creations in the spheres of religion, art or philosophy remain as the living factors in the universe when we ourselves cease to exist. To the question whether values do not exist except for persons actually continuing to enjoy their objects, we must answer that we realise ourselves far surpassing our temporal existence. The self endures in his creations which perfectly focus the unique nature of his interests as reflecting the uniqueness of his character. There would have been no noble creation if man was not initiated by such a prospect. But then the persons themselves, though they do not eternally survive, are nevertheless real, for the values that

<sup>1</sup> *Value and Destiny of the Individual*, p. 303.



constitute the real phases of the universe are explicable only with reference to them. We have seen that, the values represent the quality of the mind one comes to attain, which we can appreciate in relation to the person as such. Therefore, the value of a particular experience, I think, is to be appreciated with reference to the entire personality of a man, which determines the nature of that experience and should be taken account of in considering its quality or the quality of the state of the mind in which it occurs. It may happen that posterity fails to remember the distinctive persons by their names. Yet the nature of the creation definitely expresses the character of the agent. So, if values are real, the persons are also obviously real, if to be real, we understand, as Bosanquet seems to do, is to have the power to determine the nature of the Whole. The persons possess this capacity by all means as they are found to determine the course of the universe with the help of their creations. And with an idea like this we may try to solve the question raised by McTaggart regarding the status of the finite differentiations of the Absolute in the Hegelian philosophy. Bosanquet admits the content of what we say, for he conceives the distinctive values to be relative to the distinctive perspectives of the Whole, which are in a sense unique by themselves. And these must be the perspectives of finite individuals. But how is the uniqueness of these perspectives consistently maintained in view of the idea of their total self-transcendence? How can what is unique in itself and gives rise to the unique phases of reality, be absolutely transcended? It may be objected that finite persons as they exist, are full of contradictions and therefore unreal. But then the values evolved out of their nature are also unreal and contradictory. For, all our appreciations of the Absolute are essentially incomplete and involve contradictions in various degrees. Yet, as he admits, it is only through them that reality reveals itself and is realised and is a 'World' with them all. However, it seems to me that, Bosanquet's definition of finite individuality as being repetitive to a large extent and not being so much counted for its originality and uniqueness is not in conformity with his demand for the uniqueness of values they should create. Of course, human



natures to a large extent resemble one another, but the elements of their nature which constitute their individuality, i.e., the capacity by means of which they create values that come to determine the course of the universe in unique ways are obviously the distinctive features in them. It is because a person is an entity by himself that he creates unique values out of a situation which is common to all persons. In fact, the concept of finite self which Bosanquet offers us is responsible for this confusion. Bosanquet defines a finite self to be a result of the reaction of the spirit of the Whole over a certain range of externality. But this involves a sort of contradiction similar to that we observed in Green. The spirit of the Whole, which is the eternal principle of comprehensiveness works upon a certain sphere which even according to Bosanquet himself is to a large extent similar for all of us. But if this is so, how and on what principle, is one person distinguished from another, and how does one give a distinguished character to one's own creation?

I cannot but mention that the philosophy of Bosanquet loses its significance as a theory of value by defining the realisation of value only as an appreciation of the comprehensive nature of the Whole. That is to say, an experience is valuable in so far as it represents a transcendence of contradiction. This suggestion we have already discussed. There is however an element of truth in it. A truly great creation is indeed universal in its appeal in spite of its uniqueness. This is the test of culture and progress. But it is also possibly true that mere universality is no test of value, though it might be one state of logical consistency. An experience or an object is valuable by virtue of its distinctive nature and effect and not by virtue of its capacity to be absorbed in a greater whole. It is valued, in other words, for the unique determination of reality through its nature. Of course Bosanquet affirms this in some of his statements. But his overwhelming urge for consistency and coherence does not allow him to develop this implication to its full effects and leads him to the abstract universality, characteristic of the Hegelian school. An experience or a person is not valuable for its inclusive-





ness or originality but for the sake of its extensiveness and non-contradiction. It seems that we should all live for the Whole so as to merge all the distinctive features of our nature in it rather than the Whole should include and explain them to their highest determination. We are valuable to the extent we are resolvable in a greater context and not for what we are by ourselves.

In fact I find that in spite of his sincerest effort to provide our life with concrete values and to find for our interests and objects a real status in the world, Bosanquet's attitude is one of speculative thinking which marks the entire process of the Hegelian thought. He seems to care more for logic than for life, and instead of facing the facts of the world he only tries to make them fit in with the concept of a Whole which rather explains away than explains our concrete existence and values. Though Bosanquet affords to speculative thought a relatively lower place in human life, we find that, it is only a person who seeks to see how all the experiences of human life are absorbed and transcended in the nature of the Whole, that can realise himself fully. And this sort of experience certainly rests on an absolute knowledge, though the experience itself may be a sort of appreciation of the truth that transcends the level of what we know as knowledge.

I would end only with the remark that, in order to develop the idea of the universe as the 'world' or the concrete universal, Bosanquet should have sought to determine the particular features of the universe as the unique centres of value which alone can constitute it to be truly Individual.

## PART II

### *Section VI*

The insignificant and abstract notion of individuality that makes against a sound theory of value now turns us to consider the philosophy of Royce. Royce considers the individual selves to be absolutely real entities of the



universe and takes them to be unique, determinate and concrete beings. According to him, "By an individual being, whatever one's metaphysical doctrine, one means a unique being, that is, a being which is alone of its own type, or is such that no other of its class exists."<sup>1</sup> Royce does not ascribe this individuality to the Absolute alone. For him the particular selves are also individuals, are at least capable of being individuals and are real only as such. But individuality does not imply a mere capacity for being coherent with the system of the universe as a whole, but a concrete determination of the unique purpose reflected through the will of a particular self. It is true that individuality, as it is conceived of a certain self, exists not so much as an existing character, but rather as an ideal to be achieved, yet it involves no conception of the selves being totally transcended by the Absolute. For the ideal of a finite self necessarily consists in the complete determinateness of the purpose of one's life. The Absolute is the perfectly determinate Individual, which has been otherwise described as the community of *individuals*. Let us see how Royce comes by this idea.

### Section VII

Royce is an absolute idealist and it is convenient to begin by considering his philosophy from the point of view of the Absolute or the Whole. As he says: "The whole universe, precisely in so far as it is, is the expression of a meaning, is the conscious fulfilment of significance in life."<sup>2</sup> But to be significant means to be unique and therefore individual according to his own definition. Therefore, the Whole or the Absolute is the Individual, unique, as no other of its kind ever exists and is also perfectly determinate being the exact fulfilment of all the implications latent in the world. But as it is the unique determinate realisation of all finite purposes, it cannot absorb any of them in a manner that they are lost in it. The Whole, therefore, must realise itself in the particulars of the universe and must

<sup>1</sup> *The World and the Individual*. First Series, Edn. 1904, p. 450.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 443.





include these particulars only as perfectly determinate, the complete realisation of the unique meaning of the Whole is differentiated in each of them. It is precisely in this sense of self-differentiation that reality or God, as it is called, is described as a self. Thus the conclusion about Royce's philosophy we now come to is that reality is individuality, which means the uniqueness and perfect determinateness of the unique purpose expressive of the essence of one's existence. Individuality is the standard of value as well as of reality, and, to be precise, reality for Royce is a realm of value. This will be clear through our discussion. Here we may state by way of illustration that, in the course of distinguishing the world of description and the world of appreciation Royce seeks for a sort of experience that will not *describe* the external and universal character of objects but will take us to the heart of reality which is at the same time a world of value. The world of appreciation which he finds to represent the reality or the individuality of beings is the world of ideals or of worth, as distinguished from the world of mere description.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, to see into the reality of an idea or a being is to see into its value, that is to say, to consider it in connection with its internal meaning—the purpose of God embodied in it. To quote Royce, "In vain, then, does one stand apart from the internal meaning, from the conscious inner purpose embodied in a given idea, and still attempt to estimate whether or no that idea corresponds with its object. There is no purely external criterion of truth. You cannot merely look from without upon an ideal construction and say whether or no it corresponds to its object. Every finite idea has to be judged by its own specific purpose."<sup>2</sup> A person has to be judged by virtue of the internal meaning he represents in his life. But it must not be thought on that account that the purpose of the Whole externally controls the life of a finite being. For, like other absolute idealists, Royce also would assert

<sup>1</sup> *Spirit of Modern Philosophy* (published by Houghton, Mifflin and Co., Edn. 1892), pp. 412-13.

<sup>2</sup> *The World and the Individual*, First Series, p. 308.



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that we are free so far as God wills in us.<sup>1</sup> The determination of our nature by the Absolute is nothing short of our self-determination. The obvious conclusion from this is that the internal meaning or the purpose of reality manifests itself through our free will.

However, freedom of will as the essence of human nature has been recognised by all idealists. But Royce treats of it in a way so as to consider it to be the sole determining factor of reality from the finite point of view. The internal meaning of a particular human life expresses itself through will. This is otherwise described as 'selective attention' by means of which the person wills a certain purpose unique as an outcome of his own nature to which he seeks to give a determinate concrete form through his life. The true individuality or the reality of a particular self consists in the complete determination of this purpose as a unique factor in the universe for which nothing can be substituted.

Now, there has been a dispute as to what Royce understands to be the fundamental feature of individuality. Is it found in the selection of a unique purpose, or does it consist in the realisation of a unique plan of life? Muirhead contends that Royce is inconsistent on this point. Here we must see how far this opinion is true. As Royce says, "If we look closely at the region of our consciousness where first we come nearest to facing what we take to be an experience of individuality, you find, I think, that it is our selective attention, especially as embodied in what one may call our exclusive affections, which first brings home to us what we mortals require an individual being to be."<sup>2</sup> But though each particular selection intends a meaning in it, Royce does never consider these distinct desires to be absolute by themselves. He always considers them in relation to the plan of life which brings out the meaning to which the life as a whole seeks to be an expression. He would rather assert: "Have a plan, give unity to your aims; intend something definite by our life, set yourself as an ideal."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Conception of God*. (Mcmillon, New York, 1909).

<sup>2</sup> *The World and the Individual*, First Series, p. 457.

<sup>3</sup> *The World and the Individual*, Second Series, p. 288.



Or, as he says, "From the Absolute point of view, as well as from our own, every individual life that has the unity of a plan takes its own unique place in the world's life."<sup>1</sup> To say this is not to submit to the Hegelian absolutism. It is rather an improvement upon Bosanquet who did not admit the finite individual to be a concrete reality. Royce, on the other hand, conceives an individual self to be a unique feature of reality and its perfection to consist in the complete realisation of the peculiar meaning of its life in the form of a concrete ideal of its life as such. The particular single desires are but the fragmentary reflections of this meaning, or the different aspects of this central ideal.

Further, Royce, in spite of his inconsistent statements in certain contexts of his essays, does not actually leave us in doubt about the real meaning of individuality in the life of a person. He asserts that individuality consists in uniqueness, complete determinateness of the essence of one's existence and in being significant. Now, the unique internal meaning reveals itself in one's selective attention of the will, or so to say, the plan of one's life one undertakes to follow. But in spite of that he would never conceive a being to be truly an individual unless this meaning gets its fullest determination and by virtue of this realisation of the possibility inherent within his nature he becomes a true constituent of the universe.

In fact, he says, "Ideas as they come to us, in their finite imperfections, are first indeterminate, and for that very reason vague, general, or as technical language often expresses it, abstractly universal."<sup>2</sup> So, as he says, "It follows that the finally determinate form of the object of any idea is that form which the idea itself would assume whenever it become individuated, or in other words, become a completely determined idea, an idea or will fulfilled by a wholly adequate empirical content, for which no other content need be substituted, or, from the point of view of the satisfied idea, could be satisfied."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 289.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 336.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 337.



Certainly there is an element of truth in this contention. Apart from the abstract idea on the part of a child that all women are its mother, even in our adult experience, we find that a mere will is abstract and indeterminate to a certain extent unless it takes its course through a concrete activity for its realisation. A purpose when stated only in the form of a subjective fact knows very little of its own implication, *i.e.*, of the exact form in which it is capable of being a unique determinate factor in the world. The internal meaning as such only expresses the significance which the being may acquire as a feature of reality, but it can actually acquire that significance only when this purpose gets actualised, that is, when the internal meaning is perfectly adjusted to the external one. To put it in another way, we see that the being wants to become a constituent of reality by virtue of its inner significance, but the universe must also determine the precise way in which it may influence the course of the universe. The partial determination of the internal meaning by the world external to it does not seem to make against its uniqueness. For it is with this determination that it brings out a unique possibility otherwise impossible of being achieved.

I think, I should here refer to Royce's Fourth Conception of Being. In *The World and the Individual*<sup>1</sup> he conceives reality to be the implication of the final determinations of our will. "A will concretely embodied in a life, and these meanings—identical with the very purposes that our poor fleeting finite ideas are even now so fragmentarily seeking, amidst all their flickerings and conflicts, to express, this, I say, is the reality."<sup>2</sup> We have seen, that Royce conceives the purpose of the life of a particular self to be embodied in its will, the complete determinations of which constitutes its individuality. But an idealist theory cannot conceive the ideal to be ever realised. As Royce contends, "Owing to our finitude, will, in our own case, far anticipates its own fulfilment."<sup>3</sup> This seems to be true not

<sup>1</sup> *The World and the Individual*, First Series, Chapter I *The Fourth Conception of Being*.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 359.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 457.



only because of our limited capability for realising the willed plan of our life, but also because the will brings out innumerable implications previously unknown to the mind as it proceeds to be gradually realised and so seeks to have been determined in an infinite number of ways. Now this progressive determination of the meaning only proves the reality of the meaning itself, for otherwise it could not bring out these implications out of its own. But at the same it also shows that the meaning cannot come to finality at any point in time. The Absolute, or reality as such, as Royce conceives it, is the ideal completeness of this process, *i.e.*, the perfect determinateness of the internal meaning of a finite existence. He conceives this ideal individuality to be present in the mind of God. As he says, "But the Absolute Experience and Will form, as we have asserted, one unity of consciousness, one moment or instant of fulfilled life, over against which there is no external other wherewith this Whole would be contrasted."<sup>1</sup>

In this sense the Absolute in Royce's philosophy seems to have a likeness to Plato's Idea of the Good, which has an ideal existence though this ideal is real as it embodies the ideal perfection of all finite things and beings. The Absolute, as Royce conceives it, indicates the final determinateness of the will that proves itself to be real by evolving infinite possibilities out of itself and thus determining the course of the universe in a unique way, which we can apprehend only as the implication of the will. The ideal conceived in this way is being constantly determined by the progressive achievements of mankind. The only sense in which it is an *existing* reality is that it embodies the conception of uniqueness and determinateness—the absolute goal towards which all our actions turn. It is possible to conceive of the ideal as a realm of value as it represents the perfection of all our endeavours and is also real considered in relation to the process of the gradual realisation of individuality. It also affords the standard of value as it embodies uniqueness and the complete determinateness of the implied meaning of one's existence.

<sup>1</sup> *Conception of God*, ed., p. 298.



But I do not think that Royce would agree to such an interpretation of his theory of reality. His conception of reality is rather a religious one, and he considers religious aspiration to be the only motive behind any true philosophy. So he thinks that the perfect determination of any finite will lies with God. That is to say, we inhere in God only as true individual beings—having all the implications of our meaning perfectly realised. As this ideal determination of the internal meaning of every life is real, it must exist, and it exists in the mind of God. Unlike other idealist philosophers, Royce does not think that God beholds the world of necessity. The world of individuals, as it exists and as it is destined to be, is a result of the free, indeterminated will of God. Now this he must have conceived from the point of view of the absolute freedom of God on the one hand, and deduced it from the unique and determinate character of the universe on the other, which presupposes a symbolic or an actual (as Royce conceives) presence of a 'selective attention' in God. As he says, "The Absolute as Will is attentive to precisely such arrest of the 'unreal possibilities' of our former account—to precisely such wholeness of the Divine Experience—as shall individuate, and so complete, the data which are experienced, and the world wherein the Thinker conceives and the Seer views, the fulfilment of the Absolute knowledge in the data which are experienced." Here obviously he makes a distinction between the Absolute as willing and the Absolute as knowing. The Absolute as will is the meaning to which the universe is to offer a realisation, while the Absolute as knowing perceives this fulfilment and involves the world as realised. This only shows that the Absolute as such, from the point of view of the Whole, involves the idea of value. For the universe as a whole, be it involved in the mind of God, embodies an ideal and exists as the fulfilment of that ideal. Of course, in the Absolute as such, the value exists as *realised*. Yet the two moments, the ideal and its realisation are distinct in spite of their union. Moreover, it is clear from the above statement that apart from the idea of



something to be conscious of, that is, apart from the perception of an idea of the mind to be actual, knowledge is not possible. The Absolute is a self, because it is self-differentiated and is a self-conscious Being only on account of that. But as the essence of God consists in freedom, he must differentiate Himself as by His free will. Therefore, God must will the universe as a differentiation of His own self. And as God beholds the universe by means of His free will, it must be a world of beings who exist by virtue of their free will. Or, in other words, as a conscious self-determinate unique Self, He wills the constituents of the world to be free, self-determinate unique creatures, and to realise His purpose only as such.

However, the will of God, as reflected in the finite world and constituting our individuality, presupposes a social existence for us. The world is an 'Individual' of various individual determinations each of which embodies the meaning of the Whole in a unique way. Royce deduces our social existence from the obvious fact that, we are conscious of our individuality in the first stage of our consciousness in our contrast from other individuals, and as fully determinate individuals our uniqueness implies a difference from one another. Royce conceives that, "While it is, indeed, true that for every one of us the Absolute Self is God, we still retain our individuality, and our distinction from one another, just in so far as our life-plans, by the very necessity of their social basis, are mutually contrasting life-plans, each one of which can reach its own fulfilment only by recognising the other life-plans as different from its own".<sup>1</sup> As from the standpoint of the Absolute as such, its self-differentiation involves the idea of the world as a variety of individuals each realising the meaning of the Whole in a unique way, so also from the finite point of view, God is to be conceived as an ideal social existence, because it is only in a social existence that we can have ourselves as individuals. So, in the *Problem of Christianity* God has been conceived as a Beloved community of individuals, a Society of selves ideally conceived in their final determinations, and a spirit of absolute loyalty towards this community is due.

<sup>1</sup> *The World and the Individual*, Second Series, p. 289.



However, the social existence of man is a metaphysical necessity to our existence as individuals. So, Royce finds it necessary for us to bear an attitude of devotion to the society, though this devotion is to be determined in view of the loyalty due to us to the Absolute Society of perfect individuals. In this connection we may refer to his conception of the larger selfhood, which he finds to include and determine the nature of the included self and also to determine it to a particular place in Being.<sup>1</sup> Here Royce seems to think of the social self to determine the status and nature of the individual selves. This has been probably due to the influence of the Hegelian trend of thought. It is true that we are determined in the development of our nature by society, but later we have to see how far the idea as it is conceived here is consistent with Royce's position as a whole.

However, the social existence of man is obviously due to his individuality. It is, in other words, an existence of man due to the reflection of the divine will. Therefore, it comes about that, we can appreciate our social existence by means of that aspect of our nature which constitutes our individuality. Society as well as the individuality of others is, thus, an object of appreciation and not of mere knowledge by means of description. It is because we live as individuals in a community of the divine will that we feel a spiritual oneness with each other. Indeed, as Royce conceives, the world of description, the world which we can define in terms of universality and abstract logic, instead of giving us the knowledge of what is unique in us, presupposes the common character of selves which the selves possess as the embodiments of the will of God. But the description of the world in universal terms would not be possible if there had been no spiritual oneness amongst us.<sup>2</sup>

In fact, Royce finds the presence of the 'world of facts' as a stubborn reality, to be an implication of the nature of will which can realise itself only as transcending its 'other'. The idea of the 'ought' which characterises the essence of

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 303.

<sup>2</sup> *Spirit of Modern Philosophy*, ed., p. 410.



will needs to present the will before something objective in relation to which it conceives itself to be realised as better than it is at its present state. This is obviously an implication of the ideal nature of will and the self it represents.<sup>1</sup> But it does not seem to me that the description of reality as a Society of conscious selves can be deduced from this conception.

I shall end my account of Royce's idealism with reference to his idea of personal immortality of selves. Royce asserts immortality to be a moral necessity.<sup>2</sup> We are here to realise the purpose of God, and the divine purpose cannot remain unfulfilled. As he says, "For in this life the finite ego is only a seeker of its goal, as a knight of his quest. Yet, by our foregoing hypothesis, the goal of the Ego, its life-ideal, is one of God's ideals, actual and genuine; and for God there are no genuine possibilities unfulfilled; no true ideas that hover above reality as bare possibilities. God's ideas are fulfilled in His experience. The inevitable result seems to be that just in so far as the moral Ego really is unfulfilled in this life, there is another finite life in the universe, consciously continuous with this one, which, when taken together with this one, consciously reaches the here unattainable goal of this individual moral Ego, so that in the universe, the individual is perfected in his own kind".<sup>3</sup> But as in finite life the ideal is never achieved, this search is eternal.

### Section VIII

So far I have given an outline picture of Royce's philosophy. We can describe his philosophy as a philosophy of value whether we take it from the side of the finite or from that of the infinite. Like Bosanquet, Royce recognises our creative faculty to be contributive to reality. But, unlike Bosanquet, he finds a finite being to be a concrete and eternal feature of the universe which it is by virtue of its

<sup>1</sup> *The World and the Individual*, Second Series, pp. 28, 40, 41.

<sup>2</sup> *Conception of God*.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 322-23.



creativity. A finite life is to be seen only in relation to its ideal and the ceaseless effort of it for the realisation of the same. So also from the side of the infinite as such. The universe as a Whole can be truly perceived as the expression and determination of a meaning.

This character of his philosophy is emphasised by the description of the idea of reality as an ethical one and by the absolute recognition of the freedom of the human will. Reality is the ideal fulfilment of all finite wills. It is, in other words, a fulfilment of our moral necessities. Reality conceived in this way does not bring upon us any external determination. It is something we may seek to achieve through our freedom. As Royce conceives, "The free agents of a world are free only in so far as their essential moral relations ideally leave them free".<sup>1</sup> That is, he considers a human self to be free to determine his will towards its individuation. The limitation imposed by the term 'only' possibly means our incapability of controlling the world of facts. But Muirhead rightly remarks that for man to be morally autonomous is to be free in the true sense of the term, an idea which we inherit from Kant and some other great thinkers.

We have seen that on certain occasions Royce thinks of the larger self to include and determine the nature of the particular selves and also their place in Being. But if he here conceives of control of the individual by society, we feel that his theory involves an oscillation between the priority of the individual and that of the society, which is indeed, to my mind, an oscillation between the position of Green and that of Hegel. If it is said that the individual will can determine itself only through society, the question remains whether the individual must determine society for the sake of his own development, or whether society, as conceived as a larger self, must include and determine the individual in order to achieve the destination intended for its own. In fact, I do not dispute that society as a whole determines the life of an individual to a large extent. Nor do I intend to protest against the idea that we are somehow self-

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 32.





conscious in contrast with others and that our knowledge of ourselves as the distinctive personalities is largely due to our social existence. I only want to show that the statements that Royce makes here and there create confusion about his intention. For, though he sometimes says that the larger self must determine the individual self, he insists that we must be loyal to society in view of our absolute loyalty to the 'Beloved Community' which is an implication of the complete determinateness of individuals as the expression of unique meanings<sup>1</sup>.

But the conflict between the power of society and the power of the individual as a particular existence does not seem to affect his theory of the relation between God and man. Though Royce is an absolute idealist, the overwhelming inclusiveness and absorbing attitude of the Whole, which characterises the philosophy of the Hegelians has nothing to do with Royce. In fact, he offers us an idea of the Whole, which, except for the religious colouring of it, could give us a picture of reality, truly consistent with the progressive determination of human ideals. The Whole, as thus defined, embodies the ideal determinateness of our ideals. The distinctive values that we aim to achieve are progressively realised as we proceed. They become objective and determinate by wiping off what is vague, abstract and impossible about them and thus naturally prove their own reality. Reality, if conceived as the Whole, only represents the ideal perfection of all our ideals. It only implies that our ideals in order to be real must be 'individuated'. It is, in fact, a 'Whole' which we are to create and determine by our will as free. It is thus nothing but an ideal value ever present before human progress in all stages. Royce defines God, as he conceives Him, as representing this ideal perfection. He is not wrong in defining God as Individual and Absolute, because the Whole represents the idea of perfect individuality and is the final goal of all process. The element of will or 'selective attention' may be ascribed to God by virtue of the perfect determinateness of the world, and we

<sup>1</sup> *Problem of Christianity.*





have seen that Royce consents to this idea<sup>1</sup>. The idea of the unity of will amongst us due to the reflection of the divine will has also a justification if the divine will is taken to represent our capacity for 'selective attention', i.e., the urge for determinateness. The Whole as such is the embodiment of the perfect individuality of all. It is also possible to define the Whole in this way as the Beloved Community of individuals, love indicating the idea of will.

But the religious element in the philosophy of Royce is not negligible. On the contrary, religion may be said to be the main spring of his philosophical ideas. Though God is conceived to be a self because of his self-differentiations, Royce describes this self at the same time as the Eternal Father, who contains all individuals as ideas in his mind and creates the world out of love. He is not only free, but is indetermined in his will<sup>2</sup> and is determined by no necessity. But the Whole which has been conceived as the final determinate form of all finite purposes is determined by the necessity of these ideas; and moreover, we cannot imagine how there can be perfection and determinateness as resulting out of 'selection' (conceived symbolically or actually) without involving at the same time an idea of necessity. The Whole is indeed free as it has nothing to control it from without, but this only implies self-determination. The Whole exists by the necessity of its own, which it possesses as determining and as being determined by its constituents.

Again, if there is already a Being, actually present in or above the universe, who contains all our perfections in himself, our idea of the freedom of our will becomes definitely shallow. For in that case, we would feel no urge to exercise our will so much as in spite of all efforts we would not be able to contribute anything but what is already there. Even if it is asserted that the will of God as it comes to me can be realised by me and by me alone, the course of the world is yet pre-destined and progress and creation in human life has no real meaning unless God is taken to be an ideal logical entity.

<sup>1</sup> *Conception of God*, p. 300.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*



It is also difficult to consent to Royce's idea of personal immortality of selves. God's purpose, he says, cannot remain unfulfilled, nor is it possible to reach the ideal in finite life. So he conceives the self to be immortal in order to ceaselessly seek for the goal. In the first place, I fail to understand, why, if it is absolutely impossible in finite life to realise the end, should the finite self take pains to try for it. Moreover, in the nature of the evolution of values as it occurs to us there is nothing to suggest the conscious continuity of a particular self in order to realise its purpose. The progressive determination of a particular trend of thought does not suggest that the same individual self has repeatedly appeared in the world to develop it. For in its different stages it brings out so many unique characteristics which cannot be understood with reference to a single self. It is indeed determined to a certain extent by the idea expressed out of a particular individual, and so the whole process must recognise the unique contribution of that idea towards its determination and cannot be understood except with reference to that. But then that single idea gets infinitely determined by other ideas and brings out innumerable unique characters, so that the process in its continuity cannot be appreciated without reference to the latter as it cannot be without reference to the former. And if we consider Royce's contention that a new self means a new meaning<sup>1</sup>, we shall find that the novel suggestions at each of the stages of the developments of a trend of thought are not due to a single self. The particular idea gets determined in association with other ideas which it may influence but which have also their unique natures and cannot be realised only with reference to it. The absolute idealism introduced by Hegel, for instance, has been determined by his followers. The whole trend is indeed a continuous movement, but cannot be understood with reference to Hegel alone. In this connection I may refer to the idea of the eternity of values which I think may substitute the idea of personal immortality. I have referred to this suggestion in answer to McTaggart and Bosanquet, and I shall develop this point in the concluding chapter.

<sup>1</sup> *The World and the Individual*, Second Series, p. 308.



## CHAPTER 7

### FINAL ESTIMATE

#### *Section I*

I have discussed the conception of value involved in the several idealist theories. Now I try to develop, if possible, my own idea in the light of these.

However, all the theories I have discussed are found to involve the concept of value, though most of them do not definitely concentrate on this question. I also find that the concept of value in all cases evolves out of the idea of self or self-realisation. Now, according to certain idealist doctrines, the world of nature involves a sort of self-realisation, either directly for its own sake or for the sake of conscious beings. Yet they mainly refer to the conscious life when they discuss value. Possibly this is due to the fact that the urge for self-realisation is expressly revealed in a self-conscious being. Almost all these theories consider reality to be of the nature of a self, an idea which leads the exponents of these theories to consider the conscious selves to be the most significant elements in it. In fact, our ideals are the objects we value, and the ultimate motive behind considering anything to be valuable is the idea of perfection one seeks to achieve. One's idea of an objective value is not indeed free from all sorts of reference to one's self. An object or an idea which I find to be universally and necessarily valuable as independent of my subjective decision, is only found to refer to the universal and necessary aspect of my nature. I value a rational idea because it satisfies my reason. I determine to fight for a social good as it promises a satisfaction of the social aspect of my nature. We can also explain one's urge for the realisation of the nature of reality as such to be an urge for the perfect apprehension of the whole with which one identifies oneself. In fact, for most of the idealists, as we have seen, the standard of value is reality itself, even when self-realisation in finite life has



only an empirical validity. So, the judgment of value is not subjective, though it necessarily refers to one's self-realisation.

### *Section II*

However, I find, that in spite of the difference among them, all these theories consider the true initiative for value to lie in one's will. So, almost all of them discuss the question of value with reference to our moral life. They cannot really avoid a reference to will even when they take the problem beyond the sphere of morality. Royce, Green, Bradley, Bosanquet, Spinoza and Kant obviously conceive will to represent the essential motive for self-realisation in human life. Plato makes no distinction between morality and metaphysics. He finds the philosopher to realise the Idea of Good in the contemplation of the moral life of man and the common man to realise his perfection by obeying the social duties fixed for him. For Spinoza, on the other hand, the ideal perfection of life consists in the absolute knowledge of the unity of all things in the universe, but this knowledge evolves only out of one's urge for self-realisation, *i.e.*, one's will for perfection. Certainly, on some interpretations, will, as he defines it, becomes mechanical in its nature, which if ascertained, is sure to condemn all possibilities of the realisation of value in human life. But Spinoza by all means assumes that we are never beside the sphere of will so long as we seek to realise ourselves. The ideas of Hegel raise some questions. Hegel does not find our self-realisation to be fully accomplished with will and conceives it to stretch over to the sphere of art, religion and philosophy. Now, philosophy or the speculative knowledge of the ultimate nature of the universe has been conceived as the goal of our life in other systems as well. We may refer, for instance, to Plato and Spinoza. But in those cases we are not to transcend will in our approach to philosophy. On the contrary, it is assumed that philosophy must evolve out of the final determination of the will for our own perfection. But I think that the distinction that Hegel makes between self-realisation in the sphere of will and that in the sphere which transcends it, is rather a distinction between finite and infinite will. For it is difficult to see how will is not present so



long as there is the initiative for self-realisation, *i.e.*, for the actualisation of the ideal in relation to one's self. I think, I should here refer to the idea that Green brings in his ethics, that in human life there is no absolute distinction between will and intellect. According to Green, will is present even in what we consider to be an urge for intellectual apprehension.

However, I need mention another of his contentions to which others are also found to agree. It is this, that the nature of a person as such expresses itself in his will. This is because will constitutes character and also reflects character. Certainly I do not mean that a man can form his character simply according to his will, for in that case there would have been no moral conflict. What I mean to assert is the obvious truth of the contention considered before, that our nature evolves out of several external and internal phenomena, and as a result of that we have various desires and dispositions which determine a man to form the habit of a certain type of will that represents his character. As in any kind of action we cannot leave our character behind, the reference to will is never lost. Bradley truly finds that self-realisation in any sphere of life has a reference to moral life, for in the life we live we can never transcend our will, or, in the language of Green, the person as willing. The urge for my perfection must evolve out of my character, and so, in order to endeavour for the perfection, I must will the perfection first of all. I think, I should only mention that, a mere external fact cannot determine any ideal for us, as it is no ideal for the self and is thus incapable of involving any initiative on our part. Therefore, I agree with Spinoza when he says that, in order to determine a man towards something better, we must determine his will to be better.

### *Section III*

But the character of all men is not of the same order. Each one of us conceives of his self-realisation in a unique way. Yet most of the idealist philosophers want our particular selves to conform to some conception of ideal selfhood, which they assume to be true, even at the cost of the distinctive elements in our nature which constitutes our unique



personality. Of course this remark seems to be rather abrupt. These philosophers certainly try to provide as much scope to the freedom of the will and to the variety of human nature as their systems allow them to do. Yet in all, with the obvious exception of Royce, there is a type of self-realisation which is the absolute standard for all of us in spite of our fundamental differences from one another. This is possibly due to the fact that they have an idea of reality which in most cases cares more about universality and logical necessity than for the variety and specification we find in our life, and a particular individual is required to realise his perfection by conforming his will to that notion of reality.

According to some idealists, self-realisation is possible through knowledge alone. Plato, for instance, begins his philosophy with a promise to offer us a concept of reality which will provide scope for its realisation in every sphere of life. It appears that one is able to have the true perfection of one's life by honestly and sincerely performing the task set for him in society. But Plato comes to conceive of the virtues in a manner that, on reflection, they are found to be no other than the different forms of knowledge. Hence, it is to the philosopher that they should be referred. So, it comes about that either the ordinary man will not realise himself or he must be a philosopher in order to have a true knowledge of the ideal State and his own place in it, though it is difficult to understand, why in the latter case we should be any longer allotted our respective positions, why there should be any distinction among the classes. In fact, as I said, I do not object to the necessity of the consciousness of one's place and performance in society. My objection is to the reduction of all virtues to some forms of knowledge. For Plato morality, and even beauty, reduces itself to knowledge, and if temperance is perfect apprehension of the systematic character of the Idea of the Good and courage knowledge of what is and what is not to be feared, it is not possible for anybody to try to be virtuous unless he is capable of being a dialectician. But then the idea of the self-realisation of persons assigned to the different positions in the State with reference to the distinguished virtues must also lose its ground. So the question



remains, what sort of perfection we may expect in our ordinary life which is incapable of the dialectic? If it follows from the analysis of virtues that either we must be philosophers, which most of us cannot be, or we must remain in darkness, life indeed becomes insignificant. Moreover, human interest of every kind is not satisfied with mere knowledge or even with the idea of the nature of reality. Our distinguished personalities have their respective interests in which we live and rejoice and the perfection of the life one seeks for oneself is obviously conceived with reference to one's distinguished interests. Plato leaves no scope for a man to realise his perfection in the concrete life of interests. For he finds the only way to perfection through knowledge, and divests life of the various kinds of realisation expected of its different provinces.

Spinoza's idea of the different levels of self-realisation represents only the different grades of our knowledge. The absolute interest of our life consists in appreciating our unity with the whole of the universe and not in the realisation of those unique interests the world seeks to satisfy in us. Spinoza has an idea of social morality, but for him our social morality is only a step towards our perfection which consists in the intuitive apprehension of the unity of the universe. In fact, Spinoza also conceives the ideal self in a way that it only meets the philosopher's thrust for disinterested knowledge of the necessity of the world. It seems to me that in spite of its merits, his philosophy creates a rather negative and indifferent attitude in man towards the development of his self as an active and concrete being. He emphasises more the universal elements of our nature than those which makes of each of us a fully determinate individual, though he is not the only philosopher to do so.

The abstractness and the subjective attitude of Kant's moral philosophy is well exposed by Hegel, but even his own contention has an abstract logical character, and except for McTaggart's interpretation, his philosophy is incapable of initiating an effort for self-realisation in anybody but for the sake of mere speculative knowledge. For, the self-realisation of a particular person has no more value in the



context of the absolute reality than it possesses as a transcended *idealised* moment in the infinite Whole. Though Hegel finds the self to realise itself to a certain extent in each of its actions, in sense-perception, morality, ethics, art and religion, its perfection lies in philosophy. Hegel does not conceive the ideal to be beyond our capacity, but nevertheless it consists in the logical apprehension of the nature of the Idea.

Green's theory, is vitiated by its inadequate conception of personality, though he truly finds the true initiative for an action to be a motive for self-preservation. Bosanquet, on the other hand, treats of the relation between value and personality in a way which suggests that a person hardly feels to realise himself. Royce's philosophy has the merit of asserting the Absolute to realise itself through the perfect development of the selves as distinctive unique individuals, though his overwhelming urge for a religious philosophy and his conception of personal immortality introduce determinism and of some amount imagination into his thought.

#### Section IV

So our problem is to find out the concept of the ideal in which we are not lost, and which enables us to assert our own status in reality. Such an ideal will surely have the absolute obedience of all persons. We must see that this concept of the self is able to provide for the various interests and characteristics which constitute our unique personalities, for no ideal will initiate us to action unless it can promise a provision for the essential and unique features of our nature for the sake of which we live.

Now, we all presume to know that the necessity of our being, taken in terms of metaphysics, is expressed, however obscurely, through our nature, and the perfection we seek for ourselves implies the realisation of this necessity. The idea of the perfection of a human being is conceived in accordance with the essential nature of his self. This point no one disputes. The only object of absolute interest is obviously one's own self. The ideal that he seeks to realise



refers to it. Stated in terms of value it comes to mean that, I consider something valuable, even objectively, when it contains an element of my ideal self, or in any way refers to it. The ideal self represents my true self in the sense that it embodies the realisation of that element in my nature for the sake of which I consider life worth living, and which, I expect, will free my existence from the limitations from which I suffer.

Opinion, however, varies on the true nature of the self. The essential constituent of our personality is often explained to be abstract, *i.e.*, universal reason, and the nature of the ideal perfection is conceived accordingly.

We have seen that the will or the ideas of a man must express his nature. But the fundamental object of value for a particular person is not the existence of his self as an abstract and universal entity. An abstract ideal of life, if assumed to be true, generally involves one's indifference towards any sort of progress in action, even in knowledge, for the idea of self-realisation is not absent in any sphere of human life. A theory of the abstract nature of reality or of self proves its falsity as in most cases it fails to have any response from our nature. The nature of a particular person has its unique characteristics. These characteristics to which he cannot give life in his present state of existence because of his limitations and several external determinations, reveal themselves in the ideal existence he conceives for him. The ideal represents the true realisation of the person, so far as the person is conscious of himself at a certain stage of his life, as a unique existence in the universe which he is, or better, is expected to be, by virtue of the distinctive features in his nature. Any object, however noble, can only have a value for him if it has a bearing upon this personality. The Absolute of the 'Reality' of philosophy can initiate his endeavour for it, if it is able to provide a place for the essential feature of his personality in itself. I have dealt with this question with reference to Spinoza, Green and Royce. Here I refer to it only to emphasise the point, that our self-realisation always means a realisation of our concrete personality.



It seems to me that one is not really free from all reference to one's self-realisation even when one recognises the value of something like the law of gravitation. For it is an object of interest in the world of nature in which one lives and grows. It has thus an indirect influence on personality, though it is not that distinctive object with reference to which one's personality may have its unique development. However, I shall have to refer to this when I will discuss the question of social good. I will now pass on to some other point.

It is true that the ideal as it first presents itself to the mind is rather vague, and is an admixture of imagination and abstraction. Yet I would agree with Royce that it at least brings out the unique mode of one's nature and determines the way in which the personality is to be developed.

However, the ideal self of a person reveals itself in the objects he values. The nature of the ideal self as such is not at once present either to the person himself or to others. We have an ideal indeed, but it does not imply the constant existence of a consistent plan of ideal life in our consciousness. We have some prominent interests which lead us towards certain ideal objects, and the ideal plan of life as such is only an implication of these interests and is determined by them. Our concern is with our essential interests, and the ideal plan of life as a whole is only to provide these interests. Even a person who cares only for a calm and passive life, is determined in his idea by the love for peace and the fright of struggle and conflict. The plan as such is only vaguely or not at all consciously present to us in the beginning and is a product of careful afterthought which comes up along with the growing determinateness of the interests in the course of action. I cannot understand Royce when he says that our unique personality reveals itself in the unique life-plan, for if we could really begin with a planned idea of our life as a whole, we could avoid the conflict between desires at least to a certain extent. I am likely to be opposed by Green who finds the motive behind our action to be the preservation of the *person* as such beside all desires and dispositions. But it is difficult to see what a person is like.



when devoid of his essential modes and interests. I feel and love my own person, to be sure, and even come to form a picture of myself in an ideal state of existence, but that self is not known except by its interests and will. Indeed, I would really assert that the nature of the person as it evolves out of the universe is a unique entity—the uniqueness of which is revealed in its unique aptitudes, existing in a mode of co-operation, each of which modifies and is modified by the others. As a result of this, the person has a distinctive character, which is thoroughly determined by these aptitudes and is reflected in the expression they have in will and action. My personality is indeed a unique existence, but its uniqueness consists in the nature of its will and tendencies and not in the abstract self-consciousness. Hereby I reassert once again another of Green's contentions, which he himself contradicts in certain contexts of his works, that, self-consciousness is not conceivable except in association with the particular habits, interests and thoughts which obviously make a unique creature of each of us. However, these inherent tendencies reflect themselves in the ideal one conceives. And we shall find that the nature of one's ideal objects not only reflects one's character, but constitutes it.

### *Section V*

So the inherent nature of a person manifests itself in his will. Will is an urge to realise a certain value, that is, every will is a will for self-realisation. But will always seeks an objectification of its own. This is a point which is beyond dispute. For even 'good will' is not truly good if it is not sincere in its effort for objectification, though the actual achievement may not be the direct concern of morality. It is by virtue of this character that will is defined as active or as practical reason. But what is actually meant by the objectification of the will? Will is for a certain object that is calculated to satisfy some interest in man or in any way refers to it. But when a person wills an object, it is not the object as it exists in itself that he really seeks for. The object of the will is the object as conceived in relation to the person, that is, the object as modified by his will.



We know that a man as he exists, evolves out of several physical and psychical factors. Spinoza in his philosophy refers to this obvious fact that a man is essentially a physico-psychical phenomenon, his nature being determined both by his body and by his mind even when it aspires after the "intellectual love of God". The universe by means of its different aspects determines him through his body and mind. Now, the evolution of the universe has created him a unique entity which is distinguished from others by means of the distinctive nature of his modes and dispositions. But the universe which determines the nature of the person imprints itself on it in a way that his aptitudes and desires have a reference to the objects and ideas in the universe, and some of these aptitudes assume the form of conscious will on reasoned reflection and selection as determined by the character of the person as we have defined it. Royce's theory of "selective attention" may be mentioned in this connection. We may say, that the nature of a person wants to realise itself with reference to the 'other' which exists in the world outside him in the form of some objects or ideas. This obviously reminds us of the Hegelian conception of the realisation of the self in its other. The self seeks to realise itself in the other because the other contains an element of the self. But we have said that the interests of a particular person, though they refer to the objects or ideas of the world, are unique in their nature. And so a desire is not the desire for mere acceptance of some objects or ideas existing in the universe. When I will an object, I will it by means of my peculiar nature, as a result of which the ideal object I seek for is meant to be a novel creation in the universe, produced of my will reflected in the existing object. Therefore, it comes about that, as there is no will which is independent of all reference to the existing phenomena, the object of will, or rather, the willed ideal object is at the same time something new, not known to the world before and is not likely to evolve except for this will. Even the evolution of a new thought or the composition of a verse has obviously a reference to some idea which exists in the universe either in an explicit or in an implicit form and calls either for a solution or for a development. But the ideal object of the



will contains something more than the object of reference. It has a character which, on analysis, is found to be due to the reflection of the unique nature of the self. Will is not a will for mere consumption but for modification as well; nay, even in its consumption the self creates something new of the object. This is true even where will appears to have no creative character, as in the case of a mere will to know something. For, there we at least will to create the *person as knowing*, which of course did not previously exist. And in this sense, every will is creative as it involves a relation between the object and the agent.

However, we can explain the self-realisation of a particular self as the creation of a certain determination by the will with reference to some object or idea rather abstractly presented to it. I do not mean to say that our will is for some abstract phenomenon. On the contrary, I find it to be a fact that our interests always refer to something concrete. Yet the object with reference to which will wants to satisfy itself is comparatively abstract in the sense that the person seeks to give it a further determinateness by means of his distinctive character. An artist, for instance, loves the beautiful, and his idea of beauty refers to certain objects or ideas according to the characteristic tendency of the nature of the artist. Or, we should say, the inherent love for beauty needs to be self-conscious as being referred to those objects or ideas. But though the peculiar character of the artist is reflected in its selection of those ideas or objects, the ideal object which he wills to bring about is not indeed any of these existing phenomena. It is a unique creation of the self by means of them. Though a picture has a reference to some object in nature or some idea which may be explained in universal terms or with reference to some other ideas, it has also an aspect that implies the presence of a distinguished personality behind it.

So it comes about that every will is creative in its nature and the object of value is, in a sense, our own creation. Here we agree with Royce, though the will for modification in this case is not the same as Royce's conception of the "will to interpret" which is assumed as on the presupposition of our social existence. The idea I



want to bring about is a further development on the idealistic doctrine—according to which, will is active, *i.e.*, self-objectifying and is also ideal in its nature. Specially, I refer to the theory of Green that defines will as seeking to realise a relation between the object and the agent. It has been found that human mind, since the awakening of consciousness, has sought to modify the world around it either consciously or unconsciously. It seeks to mould nature according to its necessity and creates objects and ideas which bear the mark of its own character. This spirit to modify we may define as the spirit of creativity and substitute it for Bosanquet's "spirit of the whole", *i.e.*, the urge for comprehensiveness defined as the essential mode of our nature. Indeed, it seems to me that this spirit to modify is not peculiar to conscious selves. It is, in a sense, common to all things—of nature as well as of mind. An object or an idea must have its influence on anything it comes in touch with. In man it is first present in the form of the instinctive urge to mould its circumstances according to its necessity, and as consciousness develops, it comes to be the will to imprint itself on its objects and becomes rational and selective. Hence it turns out to be a definite attitude for the realisation of value, that is, for self-realisation in relation to its unique aptitudes which refer to distinct objects and ideas, and thereby creates novel entities in idea and in practice. When indeed the instinctive urge becomes the will for the realisation of value, we cannot say. But even in his primitive stage of existence man has a spirit to modify his surroundings, and so far as we can trace the history of the human mind in its present state of existence the urge for the realisation of value is never absent in him. Sometimes it may happen that one's conscious will fails to represent the essential aptitudes of one's nature. But that is certainly due to one's confused knowledge of one's own nature which often follows from the determination of the mind by several external phenomena. And in that case the artificiality is exposed in the constant conflict of this will with the other dispositions of the mind. The contradiction between the nature of the person and what he presents as his will to his consciousness also comes





out as the will proceeds in action. There the will involves innumerable contradictions and complexities in its way so as to make its realisation impossible. It may be contended that morality involves a contradiction between the moral will and the lower desires, but this conflict does not disprove the moral will. Without making slight of any moral criterion, I would only insist on the point which has been confirmed by all moral theories. I find that morality is not possible unless a man can identify his will with the moral will, and conflicts arise when his baser nature revolts against the dictates of morality. I shall refer in this connection to Spinoza's theory of active and passive emotions. Spinoza asserts that in order to achieve the truth, we must make it follow from our own will. In fact, it seems to me that, it is because man is really moral that we expect the moral will to evolve out of his nature in spite of all adverse conditions and artificial influences. If morality had been in all cases impossible or would have been fickle, it would have by all means proved its own falsity.

However, as I have mentioned before, though we do not always correctly interpret our own nature and fail to represent it through our conscious will, one's will at least bears a hint to one's inherent character. It brings out the mode of the nature, with whatever confusion, and leads one to the direction of the actualisation of his essential interests when he reflects on it and presses it to further determination. Royce also develops his thought with reference to some such ideas.

### *Section VI*

But the person is also modified by the nature of his own ideal, though he himself determines its nature. The person as he lives and as he seeks to live is to a large extent "created" by the nature of the value he pursuits, though the nature of that value itself is determined by the person. The person wills the ideal which is created out of the characteristic features of his mind as referred to some object or idea or even some objects or ideas in their culmination and relation. But when the ideal is thus present before



the mind, the agent seeks to make it actual in his life, *i.e.*, to determine himself in relation to the ideal. And when he comes to do so, the person himself is determined by the ideal and the means he has to take for it. As determined by the ideal and the endeavour for its realisation, the person acquires some character which had not been possible were it not for this influence.

The mind modifies the object to which the will refers in the light of the nature of its own aptitudes, and is also definitely influenced by the nature of that object. In the process of action and interaction, which is common to all things in the universe, the person and the object of reference of his will influence and determine each other. The natural inquisitiveness of a mind moves it to seek for knowledge, but the particular science to which it is drawn by virtue of its peculiar interests, say, mathematical studies, also affect it with certain characteristics like the crave for mathematical exactness and figurativeness, for instance. This much we presume to know.

But there is something more about it. I think, as I have mentioned before, that, the person is not only influenced by the nature of the object with reference to which he frames his ideal, but is essentially determined by the ideal as such and the way of its realisation. The ideal is born of one's own aptitude reflected on some idea or object, but as an ideal it is a new entity, distinct from oneself as well as from the object or the idea to which one's will refers, and as such it comes to mould the personality of the agent. Now this determination of the personality by the nature of the ideal evolves in the course of the actualisation of the ideal in the life of the person, a course in which both the person and the ideal proceeds towards determinateness or "individuation", in the language of Royce. We have seen how the ideal becomes gradually determinate in its character as it proceeds in action. The ideal at first only abstractly represents certain aspects of our nature. But as soon as we endeavour to make it actual, *i.e.*, to determine it as a real feature in the world, the contradictory elements in it begin to expose themselves and it becomes gradually developed according to its true possibilities. But the person himself is also deter-



mined in this process of self-realisation in view of the gradually determinated ideal. As we come to act in relation to the ideal, the ideal involves a comparatively exclusive attention and endeavour on our part. The person seeks to adjust himself to his own ideal and to mould and remould his present state of existence in relation to the ideal in its progressive determination. This obviously creates the person even more as a distinctive individual as the person comes to develop certain distinguished characters evolving out of his relation to that ideal. Thus both the person and the ideal object in the course of the gradual "individuation" of their nature determines each other towards further determinateness and ceaselessly intercommunicate in this process so as to determine the course of the universe so far as it can be determined in this particular relation. It is in this way that we can bring out the most out of our own person by bringing ourselves and our ideal to the exact determinate form in which they are capable of being the unique constituents of the universe of idea or of fact. Moreover, the nature of a person as moulded by its ideal may acquire some fresh inspirations and habits that not only give some new turns to the realisation and evolution of that particular idea, but even mould the personality in a way so as to prepare a ground for other values.

However, I seek to explain this idea of mutual determination with an illustration. The natural love for beauty leads a man by virtue of the nature of his aptitudes to music, art, painting, poetry or even to the study of aesthetics. Now suppose, a poet tends towards an ideal of the glorification of a human sentiment, say, the joy in the simple matters of the world. The matters are there in the world and the joy, though it may be defined as a general idea which assumes peculiar forms in different minds, is in its nature, as conceived by the poet, a unique reflection of his character. However, we have seen that, though the ideal is a creation of his own mind, the poet himself cannot at once adjust himself to it and must seek to realise the ideal. So, his nature comes to reform itself in the light of the ideal, though not always with a conscious effort, and seeks to live in this joy. Thus the ideal imprints itself on



the nature of the poet and determinates him as an individual by virtue of the distinctive character he acquires in this relation. Even the course the poet has to take for the realisation of his end leaves its mark on his character and so also on the ideal itself which gets further reflected and determinated by the individual in his progressive development.

It may be said that the nature of the poet is often found to involve some characteristics which are most unlikely in a "poet". But we must see that one's personality is a constituent of various promising aptitudes,—each of which, though seeking for a satisfaction of its own, influences the others and determines the way in which the ideal may be actualised by the person. This unique composite effect of the personality as such recreates the ideal in a determinate and workable form, a character which it gradually assumes as it begins to be worked out in relation to the entire nature of the person.

Thus in the course of realising values we create and are also created by our ideas, both being drawn towards the ideal of individuality. Individuality is rather an ideal than an existing character with man and towards this end he is prepared only as a value-realising agent. And we are capable of being and doing something real only by developing ourselves and our ideas as truly individual phenomena.

It is useless to mention here that I have developed this idea with reference to Royce. But I feel that he is concerned rather with the person himself and not so much with his creations, though his philosophy contains all the implications I have tried to bring out in this connection.

### Section VII

We have seen that the essence of a person reveals itself in the realisation of values. In this process he creates unique objects and ideas and is also created a determinate individual by means of them. So, his status in the context of reality is that of a value-realising being. The only way in which he can determine the course of the universe is by the pursuit of his values. It follows from this, and it has





also been admitted by the idealists, and a man is partly ideal in his nature, that his nature and essence is not fully exposed in his existing character unless it is understood in relation to the modes of his nature which are reflected in his ideals, though often implicitly. In fact, it seems to me that the nature of an object, be it of nature or of mind, is not truly known from its present state of existence, but comes out as its latent implications tend to be developed. So also in case of man, we can appreciate his possibilities only with reference to the ideal implications of his nature which are expressed in the course of his realisation of his values.

However, we must agree that an object is real if it can enter as a determining factor in the chain of the evolution of the universe in spite of involving any apparent contradiction in its act. And we find that a man can do this only in his capacity for the pursuit of values. This he does by his own existence as a concrete personality and also by means of the objects or ideas he comes to evolve. Man, as he grows into an individual progressively determines his ideas or the objects of his value. But he has also his influence on others as an existing personality either by virtue of his relations and actions referring to these relations, or even as an instance, in all these consciously or unconsciously entering into the minds of others and determining the nature of their interests and aptitudes. In this way he also comes to influence the evolution of values in the following ages and thus becomes a link in the chain of the evolution of the world. A man exists in and by means of innumerable relations in the context of family, society and the State which, as we know specially from the Hegelian and Neo-Hegelian philosophy, determine his nature to a great extent, and obviously control his pursuit of values. But the man also influences society by means of his unique personality as it has evolved out of several phenomena of which society is certainly one, and as it is developed in the course of his life according to his ideals. The person acts in the various contexts of his life as a concrete and determinate person which he is of course in his capacity for the realisation of value. Indeed, he reacts as *this* person to all who



are involved in any sort of relation to him, and thus determines their nature and action. Whatever course of action we take in our life, so long as we live in society, we cannot be free from the influence of other persons, even though we are not always conscious of it. This indicates the essentially social constitution of our nature which is the basis of a social morality.

But we do not determine the universe merely by means of our presence and our action with reference to the different social relations. The idea which reflects our self-realisation becomes a distinctive link in the chain of the evolution of ideas and determines it in a way which had not been possible except by it. The determination of the course of the world of ideas by fresh ideas which evolved out of the process of our value-realisation is thus the source of all progress in the province of science or art or philosophy. And so we may say that value necessarily begets values. A man with his ideas which represent his unique personality determines the evolution of ideas to some further determinateness by modifying, developing, moulding, reforming and even by opposing the traditional course so as to make it review its own character and also to make it pass through a new channel and have some fresh developments.

Thus our personality determines the course of the universe both by our presence as a concrete existent acting and reacting in our several relations, and by means of our creations which directly refer to our value-realising faculty. I am indeed aware that there is no absolute distinction between these two spheres of our life and both of these determine and refer to each other. My only object is to bring out the different ways in which we determine the course of the world, and I find ourselves to do that directly in the course of realising the object of our value and by our relation to other individuals.

But not only do the person and his values mould one another, they are also moulded by the world in which they come to exist and work. We have seen how the origin of the person and his ideas are effected by the universe. But the world of ideas and objects also moulds the nature of the person and his ideas so that it can work along with



them. As I have said in my discussion on Royce, we work in the universe and the universe also works in us. However, this must not take us to affirm Bosanquet's contention that the values of our creations are absolutely determined by the Whole, *i.e.*, according to the comprehensiveness of their nature. The universe determines the thought as well as the nature of the person, but only to see how it itself may be determined by the unique ideas and the being of the person and not to measure their capability for being absorbed in the whole. In short, the universe works in us so as to help us to bring out our inherent possibilities and to be 'individuals'. Its influence is not intended to destroy our essential character, and any form of control that may effect such loss is against the interest of the 'living', progressive and creative nature of reality itself.

### *Section VIII*

Now I would like to discuss a question which has so far remained unanswered. We have seen that our ideas prove themselves to be true as they come to be determined as the 'individual' features of the universe or as the determining factors in the evolution of ideas. It has also been found that a will, as it proceeds to be actualised, gradually strips off the artificial elements from its appearance and comes to reflect one's essential character. But it indeed takes time to see whether a certain will or idea is really capable of being a determinate factor in reality and so there should be some measures for our immediate moral decisions. Now it is indeed difficult to offer an immediate solution to a moral question, and though we need to do so, our judgments are so often subject to variation. For, a true moral judgment depends on so many factors that it often surpasses our capacity to take all of them into consideration before we decide this way or that. Here I will discuss some moral criteria which, I should say, leave our actions directly open to the decision of society. And though the other tests of our action we have offered before are objective in their nature, those we come to deal with here seem to make immediate moral decision possible to a certain extent.



It has been found from the foregoing discussion that we plead for the absolute freedom of a person in order that he may develop himself a value-realising agent, as it is in this way that he can contribute his most to the universe. But it follows from this that he is never free to do anything against the right of the realisation of value. For, the person that denies the validity of this right only comes to deny the very worth of himself in the world. If the principle of self-realisation by virtue of which I am a significant feature of the world is conceived to be false, how can I save my own status in the context of reality? Therefore, one should not be allowed to act in a way so as to oppose the self-realisation of another person. This contention sounds much like the views of Kant and Green and also seems to be rather abstractly stated. But when we come to reflect on it, we find it to constitute the basis of our practical morality.

Possibly it will be contended that, one can realise the end of one's life even at the cost of others. How can we assert the above criterion in that case? In order to answer this objection I have to enter into the question of social morality.

We have found that the urge for self-realisation constitutes the essential motive of human nature even in the primitive stages of life. Now, as we have said individuality is rather an ideal than an existing character with man. And so, in those primitive stages we did not develop ourselves so much as distinctive individuals, as we had only the consciousness of bare necessities which we found to be incapable of being satisfied except in social life. Now when some form of social life guarantees our provision and safety to certain extent, our self-consciousness, which is the peculiar aspect of human nature, begins to be furthered. We find ourselves discontented with the bare necessities and seek for the development of ourselves as 'individuals' by virtue of our distinctive characteristics. But though the peculiar interests constitute the essence of one's nature and one's idea of self-realisation has no meaning except for them, they have nevertheless a reference to our social existence. This is obviously due to this that, the social atmosphere in which we grow up



leaves its mark on our nature in a way that though the desires and dispositions of a certain person are distinguished from those of another by their unique characters, they, even implicitly, presuppose the existence of other men. A poet, for instance, composes his verses which are unique in their own kind, or even revolting in certain cases, yet the composition presupposes the existence of some minds to which it is addressed, and some ideas or problems to which it refers. It may be remembered, as I said, that the unique aptitudes of our nature seek to develop themselves with reference to the objects or ideas in the world around us. This not only reasons for the self-realisation of a reformer with reference to a social cause the nature of whose essential desires is directly determined by the society in which he lives, but also for the implicit assumption of a social atmosphere in all our thoughts and actions. Moreover, our constant co-existence develops in us some habits which we may describe as social habits. They evolve out of the necessity of our nature which has grown up in a social atmosphere, and we become more and more dependent on one another by the practice of these habits. We also develop the ideas of various social virtues which directly refer to our necessity for co-existence. It seems that, we must live a life of co-operation which makes our living fairly smooth and comparatively free from unnecessary conflicts so that we may sincerely devote ourselves to our respective missions. Our obedience to our parents, the duties to our friends and neighbours, several social obligations and also our obedience to the State belong to the category of social virtues. It is no use asking whether we could have developed ourselves in absolute separation from one another. For, as Green says, so long as we have lived, we have lived as social beings. We know that even in our utter loneliness we cannot conceive ourselves as being excluded from all relations to our neighbours. Therefore, in a life of distinguished interests and ideas we even unconsciously, assume the help of others. The essential interest of one is certainly unique in its own kind. But being born in social circumstances it is such as cannot be satisfied in an unsocial life. All these only come to show the essential social consti-



tution of our nature, and it implies that if there is a will for the abolition of our social existence it must be due to a misinterpretation of one's own nature or is due to some perversion. For there cannot be a will to deny the very ground of its own possibility, as there can be no self-realisation based on the idea of the total denial of the world in which our body and so also our mind is brought up.

However, I do not deny the necessity of change and progress. Indeed, I feel that our concern is mainly with the individuals and all that we need to do is for the perfect development of the individuals as the value-realising agents. For it is only as such that they can do their best for themselves as well for the world. The existing forms of the society should be reconstituted with a view to providing the utmost scope for realising their possibilities. All idealist philosophers are found to assert that we act most sincerely when we find ourselves to be free, and that we can bring the most out of ourselves by self-determined actions alone. Therefore, society should not exercise any external determination on us. All its control should only go to direct one's mind with the help of education and culture, to understand the true essence of one's own, and the way in which one can develop oneself as a perfect individual. We know that the self-development of persons with reference to their various interests admits of the necessity of competition. In fact, as we have said in our discussion of Green's philosophy, the very nature of the objects we pursue involve this necessity. Therefore, I must say that society has to arrange for this competition in a way so that the *fittest* may have the *best* reward. The competition should be determined with a view to adjusting our capacity to the best of their outcomes, and to rewarding us according to our merits. The urge for competition serves as the most effective motive for self-realisation and so our progressive achievements in the various spheres of life. The motive behind the action of an ordinary man is often found to be a will to realise his life better than his fellows. Possibly a common man would not feel so much for his self-realisation except for this sense of competition to reinforce the spirit latent in him. I have mentioned this in



reference to Green. The urge for self-realisation is most keen and alive in a society which provides a fair scope for competition. But in all cases, we have to see that the competition is fair, and that it does not lead to the suppression of some in the interest of others, especially because anything that goes against the interest of humanity or of society as such is against the interest of each. I do not intend to develop this point further, for it is the task of the science of sociology to see the way in which competitions may be properly arranged. However, the social laws, customs and atmosphere must provide as much scope to a man as he needs in order to determine himself according to his possibilities; but in no case should he do anything that may effect the absolute denial of social existence. We may say that the common end before us is to develop each of us as a unique distinctive feature of reality and so to realise the universe as creative and progressive. But we cannot do this except in association with one another. Indeed, the complex characteristics of human nature which have evolved in the course of time involve the necessity of a form of society which can provide for these variety of distinguished interests of distinct personalities. Society is a means to our self-development and its nature should be determined in view of that necessity.

### *Section IX*

However, I will close the discussion with reference to a point I raised before. It is the problem of the destiny of the person and his values. I think the answer to the question has already been suggested, though I feel I must make it clear. The problem is raised specially in connection with Bosanquet, Royce and Green. It may be stated in the form of an enquiry: what is the destiny of the person who devotes his life to the search of values in the context of reality? He realises certain values and aspires after more. But what happens to these actual and ideal elements when the person is dead? Two answers have been suggested, the one by Bosanquet and the other by Royce. These we have



discussed and criticised. My objection against Bosanquet is this, that the nature of the values cannot be realised except with reference to the entire personality of the agent. Our creations are valuable for their uniqueness which reflect the nature of the person as such and not for their capacity for being transcended and of explaining away contradiction. By the personality of a man I understand, as I have said, the unique constituent of certain interests, habits and thoughts, which are unique in their nature as distinguished from those in other persons, and whatever value we seek as a fulfilment of any of our aptitudes, is determined by this unique constituent as such and cannot be understood except with reference to it. So, if values are real, they only come to prove the reality of the person himself. In no moment of our life we transcend ourselves in a way that our higher thoughts may be totally discontinuous with the baser ones, for the higher can be realised only as a development out of the lower stage of life, which contains the possibilities of the nobler achievement in some way or other. Persons are certainly temporal entities, but they live in the values they create and through the effect which their existence and association have on others. And we need not repeat that the values are marked by the essential features that constitute the person and cannot be realised without reference to them. The reality of the values of which Bosanquet speaks only implies the reality of the person himself.

I object to Royce's conception of the immortality of a person, for this idea seems to be only a wishful thought based on the presupposition of a moral necessity. The question of moral necessity, as we will see, can be solved even without the idea of personal immortality. Moreover, though the evolution of an idea in a certain province of thought is distinctively determined by the unique personality of a particular being, we cannot explain all the stages of its infinite determination with reference to a single person. The instance of the progressive development of the Hegelian philosophy which we have considered before may be mentioned in this connection. At each of the stages of its development the idea gets a distinctive turn as offered by a distinct individual. Therefore, the process



of its development as a whole has reference to several minds, and though a particular person has his unique contribution in the process, and the process could not have that development except for that person, the complete development of the idea is not possible by a single person in any way. In the course of time and as a result of further reflection the idea comes to have so many unique determinations that cannot be imagined by a single person who deals with it in a particular context of time and circumstances. This should not, however, cause despair, for it only shows the possibility of the infinite progress of our own cause with which we identify ourselves. And this indeed implies a sort of immortality of our person.

However, the destiny of an individual is to develop himself as a determining feature of reality in the sense we have mentioned, and herein lies the necessity of his being. In this sense he is indeed immortal without involving any idea of continuity in time. I think this is the only destiny and the perfection of our life, and this is the only sort of immortality we may expect for ourselves. In the course of the evolution of the world there have been occurrences, all of which are not present to-day. But all of them are certainly real, as they have determined the course of the universe by their distinctive actions and the present form of our life would have been impossible except for each of them. An individual indeed realises his perfection so far as he is able to determine the course of the universe in a distinctive way through the utmost manifestation of his capacity for values. The aim of our life is not to be absorbed in the "Whole" and only to reflect the uncontradictory nature of the 'Whole' through ourselves. The necessity of our life, on the contrary, consists in determining the course of the world with our acts and ideas which reflect the unique character of our personality. It is in these determinations that our personality continues to live. I think that the moral necessity of one's person is really satisfied when one comes to know one's values and so the essential interests of one's personality to constitute the determining features of reality, and the values which a man leaves unrealised in this life remain to be developed by posterity according to the



possibility inherent in them. It is necessary, therefore, not to imagine a continuity in time. It is enough to find the way of the fulfilment of one's urge for realising one's ideal. It is in this way, and in this way alone, that we can have the most of ourselves as human personalities.





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